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DOES PRACTICE MAKE PERFECT?
EFFECTS OF PRACTICE AND COACHING
ON INTERVIEW PERFORMANCE

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Industrial / Organizational Psychology

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by
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August 2012

Accepted by:
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Dr. Benjamin Stephens

ABSTRACT

This study examined the incremental effectiveness of interview practice and feedback on candidates' interview performance. In addition, interviewee anxiety, impression management behaviors, and core self-evaluation were considered as intervening variables between the training manipulations and interview performance. In this experimental design, participants were assigned to one of three groups: the control group, the interview practice group, and the coaching group that received practice plus feedback from a counselor. Employer representatives evaluated subsequent interview performance within a final mock interview.

Hypotheses predicting differential effects of interview training on interview performance ratings were partially supported and relationships were discovered among additional variables. As predicted, less anxious candidates performed more impression management behaviors, which in turn were related to higher interview ratings. Core-self evaluation, the composite variable including self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and emotional stability, demonstrated a direct effect on interview performance, interview anxiety and impression management behaviors.

In sum, this study expands our knowledge of how anxiety, impression management behaviors, and core self-evaluation influence interview ratings.

DEDICATION

Matthew was one year old when I took my first graduate class at Clemson. A year later, Mason was born about 12 hours after I got home from a night class with Dr. Mike Horvath. Eight years later, my children have witnessed firsthand our family's love of learning, dedication to education, and commitment to a goal.

Many people have asked me how I balanced graduate study with a full-time job and raising two children. My answer is always: Jamie Williams. Without the unfailing faith and support from my husband and best friend, I would truly never have been able to reach this goal. Considering all of the late classes, evenings spent studying, weekends writing papers, and general stress and anxiety a graduate student experiences, Jamie's accomplishment – and certainly his sacrifice – is greater than mine.

My step-father often told me that education is the one thing people can never take away from you. He is among the smartest people I know, even without any formal education, and has always demonstrated that what you do with your knowledge and skills – not the degree itself – is what matters in life. He has taught me many things since becoming my dad: to swim, to ride a bike, how a car works, to give your best effort to every task, and to be proud of a hard day's work. Even during the last nine months as he has battled brain cancer, he has continued to demonstrate his characteristic perseverance.

When I was a child, I remember my mother typing papers for her master's degree in education on her 30-year-old manual typewriter. During late nights of studying and paper writing, I would often think of her, teaching during the day, helping on the farm in the evening, and traveling an hour to take graduate classes. Clearly the early examples in

my life were ones of commitment to lifelong learning, lessons I intend to continue to replicate in my own life.

This project is dedicated to my family. To my partner, Jamie, for your unwavering support. To my mother-in-law and father-in-law, for taking my children, for adopting me as one of your own, and for raising a wonderful man. To my parents, for your faith that I would reach my goals. And to Matt and Mason, for being my wonderful, creative, amazing children. I love you!

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This project – indeed my graduate degree – would not have been possible without the support I received from my committee chair, Dr. Patrick Raymark. Although I cannot begin to itemize the things I have learned from him, I count his patient and thoughtful style of teaching and mentoring among his greatest gifts, and one that I try to emulate. His depth of knowledge – and even deeper reservoir of patience – was instrumental to this project.

Thank you to my committee, Dr. Cindy Pury, Dr. Patrick Raymark, and Dr. Ben Stephens, for their thoughtful feedback and support. I have enjoyed getting to know each of them, either as a colleague, student or teaching assistant, and I value their sound advice.

I would like to recognize my former colleagues of the Michelin Career Center at Clemson University and especially Flora Riley, retired Executive Director. They hosted the data collection for my master's thesis, lending me hours of valuable staff time and access to employers and students.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the career center at Tri-County Technical College: Glenn Hellenga, Alison Reynolds, and Lynn Smith. I do not have enough words of thanks for the selfless way in which they opened their office for this project, allowing me to invade their calendar and their space for weeks at a time – through three rounds of data collection! Always kind, always focused on student learning, they have been instrumental to this project and have had a profound positive influence on my time at Tri-County Tech, a relationship I value and hope to continue.

Finally, as I complete this project I think back to the many students I was privileged to know in the I/O program at Clemson. One of the benefits of being a part-time student is my overlap with multiple cohorts of brilliant minds. Thank you for welcoming me (Tiffany, Hailey, Heather), mentoring me (Moira, Gary, Eric, Peg), sharing an office with me (Mark, Jess, Brandy) and befriending me (Melinda, Amber, Kalifa, Sarah, Melissa). I feel lucky to know you!

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The job interview is one of the most frequently used tools in employee selection. As one indicator of the importance of the interview in the employment process, most bookstores carry a wide selection of books that offer advice for the job candidate to improve interview skills. Searching a popular on-line book seller with the key word "job interview" produced 755 books, with best-selling titles such as *Job Interviews for Dummies* (Kennedy, 2008) and *The 250 Job Interview Questions You'll Most Likely Be Asked* (Veruki, 1999). The focus of these books is often on improving surface performance in order to pass the interview. Alternatively, educational institutions offer interview training assistance that can range from simply answering candidates' questions about interviews, to role-playing interviews, to workshops with detailed discussions of how to answer specific questions (Babcock & Yeager, 1973). Despite the wealth of opinions on how to improve interview performance, there is surprisingly little empirical research that has investigated how to improve candidate performance in interviews (Maurer & Solamon, 2006). At a broad level, the current study is designed to address this issue of how interview training can impact interview performance.

The potential effect of interview training on interview performance can be considered from two different perspectives: that of the employer and that of the applicant. Employers invest considerable time and money in the interview component of their selection programs and want these interviews to differentiate the candidates who are potentially good employees from those who are not. Thus, from an employer's

perspective, improvements in interviewee performance should indicate higher levels of position-related knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) rather than a fine polish applied to the surface of an otherwise unqualified or ill-suited applicant. In fact, Babcock and Yeager (1973) conclude that interviewee training might do a disservice to the interview process because an employer might not get a true representation of the candidate during the interview. These authors concluded that if all candidates perform similarly in interviews "with their weaknesses all polished up or hidden, there's not much point to holding interviews" (p. 62). However, Dipboye (1992) suggested that by organizing their background material, practicing answers to questions and researching the employer, well-trained interviewees could make the rater's job of identifying skilled candidates easier.

From the perspective of a job candidate, improvements in interview skills can mean the difference between employment and unemployment. Thus, job candidates should be motivated to improve their interview performance. These attempts to improve their interview performance may range from reading tips on how to better manage impressions to completing an interview coaching session that includes role-plays and numerous mock interviews.

Maurer, Solamon, and Troxtel (1998) suggest that there are three possible outcomes of interviewee training. First, training could help candidates identify job-related KSAs, which could allow the candidate to improve these skills in order to successfully compete for the job. Second, training could lead to polished interview performance that raises the observed score of the interview but not the candidate's true ability, likely a poor proposal to most employers. Third, training could reduce sources of variance that

are irrelevant to the true score, such as anxiety and unfamiliarity with the interview process. One broad purpose of the current study is to provide insight into these possible sources of variance by examining whether anxiety mediates the relationship between interview training and interview performance.

In addition, the current study is also designed to disentangle the effects of different components of interview training programs (specifically, interview practice and feedback effects). As Sackett, Burris and Ryan (1989) point out, insufficient research exists about the unique effects of various interview training strategies. As such, the current study provides three treatment groups with increasing depths of practice and feedback: a no practice control group, a practice interview group, and a practice interview plus feedback group. Criterion interview ratings will be produced from a final round of mock interviews with an employer in the candidate's career field. This design, paired with measures of interviewee anxiety, impression management, and core-self evaluation, will tease apart the unique effects of practice and feedback on interview performance, while investigating interaction effects of related individual difference variables.

The previous research on interview training has focused on relatively narrow populations, which has led to questions about the generalizability of this research to more traditional job applicants (Palmer et al., 1999). Specifically, much of the research comes from the career development literature dealing with job training programs for clients who are economically disadvantaged or mentally challenged (Barbee & Keil, 1973; Grinnell & Liberman, 1977). Latham (1987) outlined six major subject populations that have been

studied, which include psychiatric clients, delinquents and prison inmates, rehabilitation clients, unemployed/technical skills trainees, and disabled clients. Of the 14 studies Latham reviewed, only two utilized college populations. Palmer et al. recognized this stratification and called for additional research on new entrants (i.e., college populations), homemakers, and experienced workers.

In addition to research on expanded populations, Palmer et al. (1999) identified the need for research that investigates the differential effects of training strategies. Kristof-Brown, Barrick, and Franke (2002) agree that research is needed to investigate "which training techniques are most effective for teaching self-promotion skills, and what types of applicants benefit most from this type of interview preparation" (p. 41).

Types of Interviewee Training

Numerous types of interview training have been developed over the years, but these approaches have arisen in the absence of a broader integrative framework. To provide a bit of structure to the various interview training approaches, it may be useful to consider the literature on assertiveness training. Specifically, Rich and Schroeder (1976) describe three broad strategies for assertiveness training that may be applicable to the interview training literature. The *response-acquisition* strategy provides information to the trainee about how to respond, either through instruction (lecture) or modeled behavior. The *response-reproduction* strategy includes behavioral rehearsal or role-playing, two "brand name" strategies that require the trainee to use either a script or improvise appropriate responses to a situation. Finally, *response-shaping* strategies are characterized by the receipt of feedback, including audio and video playback, therapist

coaching, group reinforcement, or self feedback. Although the framework lends organization to this discussion, the assertiveness training literature fails to reveal any empirical evidence concerning the relative effectiveness of each of these three strategies.

These assertiveness training approaches are relevant to the current review because they mirror the possible approaches for interview training techniques. Specifically, training strategies that have been employed to improve interview performance include practice, lecture/discussion, written assignments and tests, modeling, role-playing, video feedback, and individual coaching. Coaching includes some combination of these other strategies. In reviewing this literature, Sackett et al. (1989) note that nearly all previous studies have included a combination of training techniques, along with feedback and practice, making it impossible to determine the unique effects of any individual coaching strategy. Nonetheless, the following sections will discuss the effectiveness of these different training components.

Lecture and classroom instruction. Consistent with the response acquisition strategy, several interview training studies used a training program of lecture and written preparation. Campion and Campion (1987) examined such an approach using a sample of police and fire personnel competing for promotions. The training class included lectures and discussions on appearance and dress, interview etiquette, preparation, answering questions, attitudes, nervousness, verbal and nonverbal behavior, and interview behaviors to avoid. Participants also prepared answers to 20 commonly asked interview questions and completed a pre- and post-training essay test of appropriate interview behaviors.

While participants responded favorably to the training, there were no differences between the training and control groups in terms of interview behaviors or job offers.

An alternative to traditional classroom teaching, modeling provides interviewees with examples of effective interview behaviors using either a videotaped or live demonstration. Nearly all studies that used modeling combined it with other strategies, such as lecture and role-play, making the pure effects of modeling difficult to discern. Even though modeling appears in interview training programs, Harrison et al. (1983) concluded that the "hour-long standard modeling treatment was scarcely more effective than no treatment at all" (p. 503), suggesting that modeling may not be the key to effective interview preparation.

Practice effects. The response reproduction strategy is reflected in interview training programs that engage applicants in practice interviews. Sackett et al. (1989) defined practice as learning from one's own experience without some type of active teaching. A common practice in this research is to include control groups that participate in pre- and post-interviews without any training intervention, potentially offering a clue about the effectiveness of practice alone. In some studies of this type (e.g., Harrison et al., 1983), the control groups see no change in interview performance, suggesting that practice alone does not improve interview performance.

Conflicting results are reported in Grinnell and Liberman (1977). Their subjects were mentally challenged job seekers whose practice interview sessions were videotaped. One treatment group viewed their tapes, which were paused when the subject performed target behaviors and the behavior was reinforced with a reward. The other treatment

group simply viewed their tapes without pauses or rewards. The control group, which never viewed their practice interviews, made as much improvement as the treatment groups, suggesting that practice alone could improve interview performance. It is unknown whether these results from a mentally challenged subject pool would generalize to other populations.

Sackett et al. (1989) summarized the potential effects of practice by acknowledging that the existing literature is characterized by inconsistent findings. They conclude there is no consistent practice effect and, because the literature does not report effect sizes, there is no way to estimate the potential effect size of a relationship between practice and interview performance. Furthermore, the variability in practice effect findings could be influenced by the participants' level of previous interview experience. A practice effect may be present for those with little or no prior interview experience, but that effect would be minimized when combined with subjects with more interview experience. In sum, practice may be most important for interviewees with little or no previous interview experience, but the literature has not consistently investigated or reported practice effects or effect sizes.

Response shaping approaches. Finally, the response shaping approach to interview training is reflected in a wide variety of studies that involve some form of feedback on practice interviews. The foundation of this approach is that the positive effects of interview practice may not occur unless the individual has a reasonably accurate perception of how they performed in the practice interview (Sackett et al., 1989).

Thus, additional improvement in interviewing performance may result from providing the individual with feedback concerning how well they performed in the practice interviews.

Feedback interventions have been studied in a wide variety of performance domains and are generally assumed to improve performance (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). In fact, feedback on task performance appears in many prominent theories of motivation and learning, including control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981), goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990) and multiple-cue probability learning theory (MCPL; Balzer, Doherty & O'Connor, 1989). Although the mechanisms by which learning occurs differ in these theories, feedback plays a central role in regulating behavior.

Consistent with these various theoretical approaches, providing individuals with feedback concerning their practice interviews has been a common component of many interview coaching programs. For example, in Maurer, Solamon, Andrews, and Troxtel (2001), training seminars included lecture and discussion about the interviewing literature, interview logistics, types of interviews, and interview tips. Participants conducted or observed role-plays of interviews, including sample questions, responses, and ratings forms. Group members rated practice sessions and provided feedback publicly. This type of coaching had a positive relationship with interview performance measured by communication and content in real structured situational interviews.

Speas (1979) used an experimental design to compare the effects of modeling, role play and feedback on interview performance. This study on soon-to-be-released inmates investigated five treatment conditions: a) modeling (watching a film of best practices), b) role play (practicing and receiving feedback with a partner), c) modeling

plus role play (conditions a and b), d) modeling/role play plus video feedback (condition c plus viewing and receiving feedback on their own video-taped practice interview), and e) a control group. With this design, each group experienced an increasing level of modeling, practice and feedback from the control group through the deepest modeling/role play/video feedback condition. On an overall measure of candidate suitability rated by actual employers in a practice interview setting, the modeling/role play/video condition was the only one with statistically significantly higher ratings than the control condition. The other three treatment conditions were not significantly different from the control condition. Additional dependent variables came from interviewer ratings of specific interviewee behaviors, such as appearance, ability to answer difficult questions, and ability to explain skills. Participants in the modeling/role play/video feedback condition scored significantly higher than the control condition only on enthusiasm and opening/closing interview skills. The four treatment conditions were significantly different from each other on only two of the four dependent measures (enthusiasm and ability to explain skills) but only when the video-taped criterion interview was scored by independent raters. No differences emerged between treatment groups when the criterion interview was judged by an actual employer, as would occur in a true employment interview. As the author admits, active involvement in role playing conditions was no more effective than passive observation of modeling for most criterion measures.

As in Spears (1979), videotaped interviews are used in coaching strategies. In Harrison et al. (1983), the control group watched a videotaped interview and practiced an

interview while the treatment condition viewed the interview and were told to watch for specific interview behaviors before practicing an interview. Called cognitive mapping, these explicit instructions helped the treatment group learn specific interview behaviors. The treatment group achieved higher post-training interview scores than the group that merely watched the video and practiced behaviors.

Williams (2008) examined the incremental effectiveness of interview practice, feedback, and coaching on interview performance for inexperienced interviewees. Participants (N = 102) were randomly assigned to one of four groups: no interview practice, interview practice with no feedback (practice group), interview practice and observation of the video-recorded practice interview (self-feedback group), and interview practice with video observation plus counselor-provided feedback (coaching group). Organizational recruiters evaluated subsequent interview performance within a mock interview. Results revealed that interview ratings for the coaching group differed significantly from the control group. In addition to the increase in ratings, the coaching group reported significantly less communication anxiety than the practice and self-feedback groups. The findings suggest that feedback plays an important role in lowering interview anxiety and enhancing interview performance.

The distinction between self-provided feedback and other-provided feedback is not minor. In the previous study by Williams (2008), participants rated the quality of their own interview behaviors using a standard evaluation form developed from the literature on successful interview behaviors. These prompts both introduced the desired behavior and required participants to generate evaluative feedback about their performance. As

described in Rich and Schroeder (1976), the participant is responsible for "detecting and correcting discrepancies between his or her performance and that of the criterion" (p. 1087). Individual difference variables, such as core self-evaluation, may affect the applicant's ability to generate self-feedback. In other-provided feedback – the coaching condition in Williams – a professional counselor trained to advise applicants on interview behaviors generated feedback about the discrepancy between the subject's behaviors and ideal interview behavior.

Given the state of the previous research on this topic, the primary purpose of the present study is to disentangle the effects of practice versus feedback on interview performance while investigating individual difference variables that affect this relationship. Based on the literature discussed previously, viewing a video of their practice interview may enhance job applicants' interview performance by allowing the applicants to focus attention not only on the content of their responses, but also on how they responded to the interview questions (i.e., non-verbal behaviors). Nonetheless, it is possible that some interviewees may be unable to appropriately critique their videotaped practice interview, or they may notice deficiencies in their interview performance but not know what to do to improve their performance. As Sackett et al. (1989) note, externally provided feedback is especially important in the interview setting where the desired responses might not be readily apparent to the applicant. Thus, feedback from a trained counselor could lead to improved interview performance. In the present study, it is expected that the counselor will guide the interviewee toward the most appropriate interview behaviors while those participants in the practice condition will be left to create

their own understanding of what behaviors are desired in the employment interview. Furthermore, experiencing a practice interview is expected to help participants in the practice condition improve their performance over those participants in the control condition. Consistent with the extant literature outlined here, the current study proposes:

H1a: The training manipulation will have a significant effect on interview ratings such that the coaching condition will receive higher interview ratings than the practice condition, which will in turn receive higher ratings than the control condition.

In addition to differences in interview performance, previous research has evaluated candidate reactions to training. Reaction criteria has long been employed to measure training effectiveness, appearing as the first measurement technique in Kirkpatrick's well-known model of training effectiveness (Kirkpatrick, 1976). Alliger, Tannenbaum, Bennett, Traver, and Shotland (1997) proposed a distinction between measuring trainee's affective reactions (i.e., enjoyment of training) and their utility judgments (i.e., how much they learned). In one interview training study, researchers measured trainees' affective reactions using a self-report of comfort, or the degree that applicants felt at ease during the interview, and a rating of self-consciousness, or the extent to which subjects thought about non-verbal behaviors during the interview (Straus, et al., 2001). Participants were significantly more comfortable in face-to-face interviews compared to videoconference interviews, although the conditions did not differ on measures of self-consciousness. To measure utility judgments, Campion and Campion (1987) asked participants to rate the extent to which the training helped them improve their interview skills and to what extent they believe the training will increase their

interview effectiveness, finding the participants in the in-class training condition reporting significantly higher utility judgments compared to the self-study condition. In another related study, Maurer and Solamon (2006) also requested participant feedback to training, concluding that participants felt the training helped them prepare for the interview and perform well during the interview. This literature supports the following hypothesis:

H1b: Training condition will be positively related to both affective and utility reaction measures, with the coaching condition receiving more positive reactions than the practice condition.

In summary, a variety of interview training techniques appear in the literature, the success of which can be measured by both interview performance outcomes and candidate reactions to training. The muddled nature of practice and feedback within the literature limits the conclusions that can be drawn about the differential effectiveness of practice and feedback in interview training programs. Compounding this question, the effectiveness of both practice and feedback might differ across people due to several relevant individual difference variables, a discussion of which follows.

Anxiety and Interview Performance

High anxiety, either with social interactions or interviewing in particular, may affect interview performance. Hollandsworth, Glazeski, and Dressel (1978) present a case study of a candidate with high social anxiety that prevented him from finding optimal employment, even though he had obtained his bachelor's degree. After the behavior

modification training program, the candidate was able to complete interviews successfully and ultimately obtain a job.

In a 1998 study by Ayres, Keereetaweep, Chen, and Edwards, the authors examined communication anxiety. They asked interviewers to rate the candidates' communication effectiveness and the likelihood of offering a job. The interviewees completed a self-report of their levels of anxiety related to their ability to communicate in the interview. The researchers found participants with low communication anxiety maximized their time in the interview by speaking more and using good non-verbal skills while those high in anxiety talked less and maintained lower amounts of eye contact. Most interestingly, in preparing for the interview, those low in anxiety spent more time mentally rehearsing interview scenarios and talking with others about the interview while those high in anxiety spent more of their preparation time thinking about how poorly they might perform in the interview.

McCarthy and Goffin (2004) also addressed interviewee anxiety. They measured anxiety using the Measure of Anxiety in Selection Interviews (MASI) and found that high scores were negatively related to interview performance. This previous research provides the foundation for the hypothesis:

H2a: Interview anxiety will be negatively related to interview ratings.

McCarthy and Goffin (2004) suggest that "techniques to reduce applicant anxiety may increase the comfort level, as well as interview performance, of job candidates" (p. 632). Although the literature lacks evidence of successful anxiety reduction techniques applied to job interviews, information about the relative effectiveness of anxiety

reduction strategies can be found in the communication anxiety literature. Specifically, Allen, Hunter and Donohue (1989) meta-analyzed the existing literature on reducing public speaking anxiety. They found that all three primary anxiety reduction techniques were effective at reducing public speaking fear, with cognitive therapy (modifying the speaker's beliefs about the anxiety) outperforming both systematic desensitization (associating the anxiety stimuli with learned relaxation techniques) and skill training (increasing confidence by correcting any skill deficits). In addition, the meta-analysis revealed that combination methods appear to be more effective than individual methods, with a combination of all three primary techniques producing the greatest effect ($r = .51$). This body of research focuses on diagnosed social and communication anxiety disorders, however, requiring further research to determine if the same benefits would be found in reducing the typical anxiety experienced in a job interview setting.

Also in the communications literature, Williams (1995) suggested these activities to reduce anxiety and increase self-efficacy for public speaking: experience (practice), modeling (watching another perform), visualization, verbal persuasion (cognitive modification) and physiological feedback. Rodebaugh and Chambless (2002) examined the effects of video feedback on public speaking, arguing that video feedback would provide both experience and modeling treatments, while video feedback with a counselor/mediator would also include the verbal persuasion treatment. They measured the effect of video feedback on self- and observer-ratings of speech performance. Participants who watched a video of their speech reported a significantly stronger decrease in self ratings of anxiety (and increase in self-rated performance) compared to

the control group that recorded but did not watch their speech performance. As is common in the communication anxiety literature, only participants demonstrating moderate to high levels of public speaking anxiety prior to treatment were included in the study.

Although the communications anxiety literature suggests that practicing an interview may decrease anxiety, it is also possible that this training condition may increase anxiety since it may highlight interviewing inadequacies without providing any guidance as to how to improve. In contrast, a career counselor can provide reassurance about positive elements of performance and guidance to improve negative aspects. Furthermore, these changes in interviewing anxiety due to the different training conditions may serve to moderate the relationship between training and interview performance. Because not enough evidence exists on which to predict the direction of the relationship, the following research question is proposed:

RQ1: How do the interview practice and interview coaching conditions influence interview anxiety?

McCarthy and Goffin (2004) distinguished between communication, performance and social anxiety within the selection interview. Communication anxiety describes stress that impedes a candidate's ability to express him or herself well in the interview. Performance anxiety involves worry or a preoccupation with the outcome of the interview. Social anxiety, which describes feelings of apprehension about social behavior, is related to one's ability to interact in social situations and leads those high in social anxiety to become upset by situations that require social interaction. Consistent

with hypothesis 2a, all three subcomponents are expected to be negatively related to interview performance. This logic forms the foundation for the following hypothesis:

H2b: All three subcomponents of interview anxiety (communication, performance, and social) will be negatively related to interview performance.

Consistent with the first research question, there is not enough research to predict the manner in which interview practice and coaching will affect the subcomponents of interview anxiety. As such, the following research question is proposed:

RQ2: How do the interview practice and interview coaching conditions influence the three subcomponents of anxiety?

Core Self-evaluation and Interview Performance

Core self-evaluations include the personality traits of self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability. Although originally posited as a way to explain job satisfaction, it has since been demonstrated that core self-evaluations are "basic conclusions or bottom-line evaluations that individuals hold about themselves" (p. 58) and are related to work motivation, job satisfaction, job performance, life satisfaction, and stress (Judge, 2009). The self-evaluative nature of these traits may play an important role in interview performance as the evaluative nature of the interview is likely to prime the candidate's self appraisal.

Four personality traits comprise core self-evaluation: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability, and locus of control. Self-esteem is a broad concept that applies to cognitive, emotional and behavioral abilities. As an "evaluative" concept, individuals appraise their relative strength of this trait, as opposed to descriptive traits

like agreeableness, which includes outward behaviors to demonstrate the trait. Self-esteem is an internal value of self-worth, which is applied in a global manner to the individual's overall ability and merit. As Locke, McClear, and Knight (1996) noted regarding the relationship between self-esteem and job satisfaction, "a person with a high self-esteem will view a challenging job as a deserved opportunity which he can master and benefit from, whereas a person with low self-esteem is more likely to view it as an undeserved opportunity or a chance to fail" (p. 21). The same logic can be applied to the job interview: a candidate with high self-esteem is likely to see the job interview as an achievable challenge, eliciting the candidate's best performance, while a candidate with low self-esteem may wither at the perceived insurmountable threat of the interview.

Generalized self-efficacy, the second CSE trait, is also an internal evaluative trait. This trait reflects one's confidence in the ability to cope effectively with a wide variety of situations. Just as Judge, et al. (1998) argued that self-efficacy is the mechanism through which success on the job affects job satisfaction, self-efficacy for the job interview based on past successes (or failures) can influence a candidate's confidence in their interview skills. People with high self-efficacy are more effective at dealing with failures and persist through difficulties (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Candidates with high self-efficacy will be less likely to withdraw from the task or lower their effort compared to candidates with low self-efficacy (Lock & Bono, 2001). In the challenging setting of employment interviews, candidates with high self-efficacy should be expected to maintain their motivation through difficult interviews.

The third CSE trait, emotional stability (the inverse of neuroticism), describes the tendency to feel calm and secure, with less likelihood to experience negative emotions from everyday events. People with lower emotional stability are predisposed to experience negative affect (McCrae & Costa, 1991) while those with higher emotional stability demonstrate a positive correlation with job performance (Salgado, 1997; Tett, Jackson & Rothstein, 1991).

Finally, locus of control explains one's belief about what controls his life: external locus of control means outside forces (such as luck) control one's life, while internal locus of control means that one's environment and life outcomes are controllable (Johnson, Rosen, & Levy, 2008). When individuals with an internal locus of control perform poorly, they tend to increase their efforts to match their performance standards (Weiss & Sherman, 1973). When individuals with an external locus of control perform poorly, however, they tend to lower their standards or withdraw from the task (Brockner, 1988).

Bono and Colbert (2005) found that individuals high in CSE are motivated when there is a discrepancy between self-feedback and feedback from another. Conversely, those low in CSE are motivated when self- and other-provided feedback match. The authors go on to discuss that a coach can work with individuals who receive discrepant feedback to move them toward self-improvement rather than denial or self-enhancement. Day (2001) notes that coaches or counselors may be effective when feedback is complex or when recipients lack the skills to interpret or use the data. These strategies can be applied to the interview setting. Candidates who leave an interview with a positive view

of their performance can easily find themselves in denial about why they were rejected for a position (e.g., “that recruiter was biased”) rather than accept that another person’s appraisal of their performance may have been negative. If a candidate receives feedback to explain the reason for the rejection, the information is only helpful if the candidate uses the feedback as motivation to improve his performance. If he disregards the feedback (high CSE) or succumbs to its de-motivating force (low CSE) then the feedback has been useless. As this study will examine, having a trusted coach to provide feedback and make recommendations for changes to subsequent performance may be the key to ensure that feedback is accepted and used in a motivational manner.

The manner by which CSE affects performance can be explained by control theory (Carver, 1979). People will choose to increase effort only if they have positive outcome expectancies. That is, if the candidate has low CSE and does not believe they can increase their performance, then the feedback round will not have encouraged these candidates to improve performance. In fact, the feedback may actually hinder performance by lowering expectations for a positive outcome in low CSE candidates.

In keeping with the definition of high CSE found in the literature reviewed here, high CSE for the purpose of this study will be defined as low neuroticism, an internal locus of control, and high self-efficacy and self-esteem. High-CSE job candidates can be expected to worry less about the outcomes of their interview, believe they have control over the situation through their actions, and feel confident about themselves in general and their interview skills in particular. All of these characteristics can be anticipated to

elicit a positive response from employers in the interview setting. As such, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3a: Core self-evaluations will be positively related to interview performance.

H3b: Core self-evaluations will moderate the relationship between training and interview performance such that a larger increase in performance will occur for low-CSE compared to high-CSE applicants as breadth of training increases.

A branch of research on CSE has investigated its relationship to motivation. For example, Judge, Erez and Bono (1998) found that CSE may influence the decision about whether to engage in certain behaviors and how much effort to expend. This idea can be applied directly to a candidate's level of effort in the job interview. In the same study, Judge et al. also demonstrated a relationship between CSE and persistence in the face of failure or setback. Likewise, the individual job interview – as well as the process of interviewing over time in a difficult job market – requires job candidates to recover after setbacks.

Taken together, individuals with high CSE have better job performance, career success, and job and life satisfaction. In addition, they experience lower levels of stress and cope more effectively with setbacks (Judge, 2009). CSE may provide a resilience resource to improve stress resistance through several mechanisms. Self-esteem, which has been linked to well-being and greater stress resistance (Cohen & Edwards, 1989; Hobfoll & Leiberman, 1987), may discourage individuals from interpreting challenges as a sign of their own self-worth, inoculating them against stress responses. Likewise,

people high on emotional stability are less likely to experience interpersonal stress and are less vulnerable to stressors (Luria & Torjman, 2009).

These advantages can be applied to the job interview setting. In Luria and Torjman (2009), candidates participating in a 2-day military selection process reported the perceived stress of the experience: candidates lower in CSE perceived higher stress levels. Candidates reporting higher perceived stress received lower performance scores from raters. As explained by the conservation of resources theory, candidates with higher stress (controlling for cognitive ability and, in this case, physical ability) have fewer resources available to focus toward performance (Luria & Torjman, 2009). Extending this research to non-military settings, it could be expected that a low-CSE job candidate would perceive high anxiety in an employment interview. The candidate's reduced self-efficacy could limit his ability to cope with set-backs, causing him to retreat from the task and miss subsequent opportunities to improve his performance in the interview. Over time and a few failed interviews, the candidate with low CSE may find himself performing significantly worse than his high-CSE counterpart with similar skills and experience. Conversely, in the face of setbacks both within the single job interview and over multiple interviews, the candidate with high CSE could be expected to redouble his efforts, approaching each new question and each new interview with effective coping skills and positive self-evaluation. Rooted in this literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3c: There will be a negative relationship between core self-evaluation and interview anxiety.

In sum, individuals high in CSE experience better job performance and life satisfaction. They enjoy lower levels of stress and cope more effectively with challenges. This individual difference variable can help explain the differences in interview performance as well as account for variance in the effectiveness of interview training.

Impression Management and Interview Performance

Impression management (IM) has been defined as individuals' conscious or unconscious attempt to control the images created about them during social interactions (Schlenker, 1980). Understanding the employment interview as a social interaction, studies have shown that applicants do successfully use impression management behaviors in structured interviews (e.g., Ellis, West, Ryan & DeShon, 2002; Stevens & Kristof, 1995).

Impression management has been divided into verbal and non-verbal behaviors. Non-verbal efforts to influence another's impression in an interview setting include appearance (e.g., dress), body language and facial expressions (e.g., smiling and leaning forward) (Van Iddekinge, McFarland & Raymark, 2007). Verbal IM behaviors have been further divided into defensive and assertive behaviors. Defensive behaviors are designed to repair or protect one's image, such as the use of excuses or justification (Stevens & Kristof, 1995). In an interview setting, defensive behaviors are used to deflect the responsibility of mistakes or past decisions as a product of the situation (Kleinmann & Klehe, 2011).

In contrast, assertive behaviors include ingratiation (other-focused) and self-promotion (self-focused) tactics (Tedeschi & Norman, 1985). Ingratiation seeks to

promote interpersonal liking by flattering the interviewer or emphasizing commonalities. Self-promotion, which can be interpreted as an expected behavior in an employment interview, includes efforts to convince the interviewer of the candidate's job-related characteristics. Self-promotion and ingratiation behaviors have been demonstrated to be positively related to interviewer evaluations (Ellis et al., 2002; McFarland et al., 2002; Peeters & Lievens, 2006; Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Van Iddekinge et al., 2007). Kleinmann and Klehe (2011) found that self-promotion was more strongly related to interview success than was ingratiation. As such, the current study proposes:

H4a: Participants' use of assertive verbal impression management strategies will be positively related to interview ratings.

Interviewing is a stressful event for most applicants. Experiencing high anxiety may impede a candidate's ability to attend to IM behaviors during the interview, which can help explain why anxiety can have a negative relationship with interview performance. Candidates experiencing high anxiety are likely to exhibit outward signs of anxiety, such as shaking hands, a weak voice, and sweating. These behaviors are generally inconsistent with successful non-verbal impression management behaviors. In addition, candidates high in anxiety may have limited resources available to guide their successful use of verbal IM behaviors, including self-promotion statements or ingratiation tactics. As such:

H4b: Impression management will partially mediate the relationship between anxiety and interview performance.

Previous research has shown impression management behaviors to be a function of stable individual differences (Peeters & Livens, 2006; Van Iddekinge, et al., 2007). These studies show that impression management is related to self-monitoring, self-esteem, locus of control, and certain Big Five personality dimensions, including emotional stability. Specifically, Delery and Kacmar (1998) found a significant negative relationship between applicant self-esteem and their use of entitlement-focused impression management (a self-focused strategy). The same study reported a significant positive relationship between internal locus of control and use of entitlements. Silvester, Anderson-Gough, Anderson and Mohamed (2002) reported a significant positive correlation between external locus of control and use of external-uncontrollable attributions (a defensive verbal strategy that puts blame for failures onto external factors). Finally, Van Iddekinge, et al. found a significant positive relationship between neuroticism and both self- and other-focused impression management strategies.

Interestingly, the core self-evaluation construct discussed previously subsumes several of these individual difference variables discussed here (self-esteem, locus of control and emotional stability). Although a relationship between impression management and these individual components of core self-evaluation has been demonstrated in the literature (e.g., Delery & Kacmar, 1998, Silvester, et al., 2002), I was unable to locate any research investigating the relationship between impression management and core self-evaluations. Nonetheless, based on the relationships obtained with the components of CSE, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Core self-evaluation will be positively related to impression management behaviors demonstrated in the interview.

Measuring Interview Performance

What constitutes good interview performance? This section will review the strategies that have been used to measure interview performance in the literature and will conclude with a summary of the performance measurements that will be employed in the current study. This section begins with the proximal performance issues related to the candidate's behavior. Next, intervening factors such as impression management behaviors and interviewer perceptions will be described. Finally, interview ratings and job performance – distal factors to the candidate but more bottom line issues to the employer – will be addressed.

The interview training literature includes examples of interview performance measures that range from narrowly-defined communication mannerisms to more general interview behaviors. Hollandsworth, Dressel, and Stevens (1977) measured length of eye contact, total length of interview, length of each answer, loudness of voice, ability to explain skills, openness and honesty, number of positive self-statements, and speech disturbances (reverse scored). Straus, Miles, and Levesque (2001) measured general abilities, likeability, physical attractiveness, communication understanding, and conversation fluency. In Campion and Campion (1987), interviewers rated the candidates' interview preparation (appearance, questions, responses), communication performance (verbal expression, eye contact, attitude, calm), and the match between candidate's background and job opening.

While considering the specific behavioral responses that can be measured, it might be beneficial to consider what interviewers in the field find most significant. As Shaw (1973) wondered, “is there a common agreement on what constitutes good interview behavior?” (p. 53). As part of a study on the importance of social skills in the interview, Trent (1987) developed a list of positive and negative verbal and non-verbal behaviors rated important by employers. Positive behaviors included using a firm handshake, requesting additional information, and answering questions completely. Negative behaviors included rambling, using negative verbal content, ending statements with giggles, avoiding eye contact, and performing distracting facial or hand movements. Hollandsworth, Kazelskis, and Stevens (1979) found recruiters put the most importance on appropriateness of content, then fluency of speech, and finally composure.

Many successful interview outcomes are attributed to a candidate’s ability to create a particular impression. Successfully employing impression management skills can bring an applicant to the top of the candidate pool. Citing von Baeyer, Sherk, and Zanna’s (1981) findings that participants matched their self-presentations to interviewer preferences during mock interviews, Stevens and Kristof (1995) predicted that impression management behaviors would spontaneously occur during actual employment interviews. They found a positive relationship between use of impression management tactics and both interviewer perceptions of applicant suitability and likelihood that applicants would be invited for second-round interviews.

Outside of research settings, the ultimate measure of interview performance is a job offer or second-round interview. Few studies use actual hiring results, however, as

pointed out by Palmer, Campion, and Green (1999), due to the mock nature of most interview training laboratory studies. One field study by Campion and Campion (1987) used actual job offers as the criterion measure and found training had no effect on job offers. While other field studies use interviewer ratings as the criterion measure, all of these studies used a nonrandomized sample of candidates for promotion within a city fire and police department (Maurer & Solamon, 2006, Maurer et al., 2001, Maurer, Solamon & Troxtel, 1998), making generalization difficult.

Instead of actual hiring outcomes, some studies use a question of global "likelihood to hire." For example, Campion and Campion (1987) included a question about the likelihood that the candidate might receive a job offer ("understanding that this is not an official expression of interest, what is the likelihood that the candidate might receive a job offer" p. 681).

Consistent with the evaluation framework described here, the present study will gather candidate reactions to training, measuring both affective reactions to the practice and feedback experience and utility judgments assessing the degree to which candidates felt their interviewing skills improved as a result of the experimental conditions. Consistent with the framework described, intermediate factors such as impression management behaviors and anxiety-demonstrating behaviors will be measured from the perspective of both the candidates and the interviewers. Finally, the outcome variables will include bottom-line interview performance measures of likelihood to hire and global interview performance ratings.

Contributions of the Current Study

As discussed in this literature review, although previous research offers evidence to support the existence of a relationship between interview training technique and candidate interview performance, the literature does an incomplete job of explaining the nature of this relationship. Specifically, aside from Williams (2008), previous studies have contaminated the effects of practice and feedback on interview performance by failing to separate these training components. Systematically measuring the unique effects of practice and feedback on interview performance will fill a void in this literature.

As an extension to Williams (2008), the current study incorporates core self-evaluation as a potential mechanism to explain the mixed results of the effect of training on interview performance present in the literature. If the ability to improve one's interview performance is related to the individual difference variables included in CSE, the results of this study will help explain the inconsistencies present in the literature regarding the effectiveness of interview training techniques.

As a composite variable, CSE uses a higher level of analysis than many of the specific individual difference variables included in previous research (i.e., social anxiety in Hollandsworth, Glazeski, and Dressel, 1978; communication anxiety in Ayres, Keereetaweep, Chen, and Edwards, 1998). Likewise, the level of measurement for the dependent variable – employer suitability ratings – makes this research more appropriate for applied settings compared to previous studies that measured interview performance with finite behaviors (i.e., length of eye contact in Hollandsworth, Dressel, and Stevens,

1977; conversation fluency in Straus, Miles, and Levesque, 2001). As such, investigating the relationship between the CSE composite personality variable and employer ratings of interview performance creates an experimental condition with improved fidelity over previous research.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Participants

Students at Tri-County Technical College who were registered for General Psychology, Organizational Psychology, and Professional Communications were invited to participate in this study. The students at this college represent a variety of ages, from new high school graduates to adults returning to school to continue their education. As of fall 2010, there were over 6,900 students at this college with an average age of 24.8. Full-time students comprised 60% of the student population and 57% were female. Regarding racial diversity, just over 80% of the student population was white, 13% were black, and the remaining 7% were comprised of Hispanic, Asian, multiple races, or of undisclosed race.

In fall 2011, there are approximately 300 students enrolled in Organizational Psychology across 10 sections of the course. Organizational Psychology is a 100-level course that is required for students pursuing industrial career majors, such as heating/ventilation and air conditioning and machine technology degrees. Most students in this course have the goal of completing a certificate program or two-year degree and obtaining a manufacturing or industrial job in the local area. General Psychology is a college transfer course (200-level), equivalent to Introduction to Psychology at a four-year university. The course is required for nursing majors, medical lab technician majors, veterinary technology, education majors, and general studies majors. It is also a popular course for students transferring to a four-year college. As such, the course contains a

mixture of students destined for a four-year university and those who plan to finish a two-year degree in order to obtain a job in the healthcare or education fields in the local area. In fall 2011, there were nearly 1,000 students enrolled in General Psychology across 33 sections. Professional Communications is a 100-level English course for students completing two-year terminal degrees in career training programs such as office technology, business management, dental assisting, and industrial technology majors. In fall 2011, there were 18 sections of this course, with a total enrollment of approximately 500 students.

Participants received an email invitation and an in-class personal invitation to participate in a practice interview program which allowed them to interview with desirable employers in the local area. While participants did not receive a monetary reward for participation, some students were offered extra credit in their psychology or English courses for participation in this study. More importantly, participating in the study provided the students with an opportunity to conduct interviews with real recruiters. Attempts were made to match participants to recruiters in their field of interest as much as possible, which provided job-seekers with exposure to potential employers of interest. Given that over half of the participants in this study were interested in securing a job in the local area, the opportunity for exposure to these employers can be considered a main motivation for participation in this study.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the following groups: 1) active control group, 2) practice interview (practice condition), and 3) practice interview with video and verbal feedback provided by a career counselor (coaching condition).

Employers were invited to serve as mock interviewers. The career center at the college provided the author with contacts to employers who regularly recruit students in the majors represented by the student participants. Employer participants received no reward for participation.

Setting/Apparatus

This lab study was conducted in a college career center. Final mock interviews were conducted in interview rooms that are regularly used for recruiters conducting on-campus interviews.

Practice interviews were conducted using the PerfectInterview mock interview system. This computer program provides a standard list of interview questions prompted by a video image of a recruiter on the screen. The participant answered each question, and each answer was digitally recorded (audio and video) using a web camera attached to the computer screen. The image includes the upper torso and head of the interviewee, including any hand gestures that are performed within camera range.

Measures

Demographic. Age, gender, race, previous interview experience and previous work experience were collected.

Core Self-Evaluation Scale (CSES; Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003). This 12-item scale measures CSE as a unified trait using a 5-point Likert scale.

Measure of Anxiety in Selection Interviews (MASI; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004). The MASI measures anxiety typically experienced during job interviews. This empirically-developed scale is based on an interactional approach that treats anxiety as a

situation-specific trait. Because the validation study demonstrated a weaker relationship with interview performance for the appearance anxiety scale (r = -.15) and behavioral anxiety (r = -.16), these two scales were eliminated from the measure, while maintaining the communication anxiety, social anxiety, and performance anxiety scales. The measure was completed when candidates agreed to participate and again immediately before the criterion interview.

Interview Feedback Form. Adapted from the Job Interview Rating Scale (Barbee & Keil, 1973), this form was used by trained career counselors to provide feedback to participants in the feedback condition.

Post-practice/coaching Candidate Reactions. To measure candidates' affective and utility reactions to the training sessions, participants in the practice-only and coaching conditions completed this measure immediately after the training treatment. The measure is comprised of select questions from previously published measures of participant reaction to interview training programs (Brown, 2005; Campion & Campion, 1987; Maurer & Solamon, 2006; Straus, Miles, & Levesque, 2001). Four items measure affective reactions (e.g., "I enjoyed practicing a job interview today") and four items measure utility reactions (e.g., "Today's interview practice/coaching session will improve my interview skills". The measure was completed again immediately after the final criterion interview to measure affective and utility reactions to the training conditions.

Impression Management - Employer. To determine if interviewers can identify impression management behaviors used by candidates, the interviewers completed a revised version of the impression management scale from Kristof-Brown et al. (2002).

Impression management - Candidate. After the interview, student participants completed a post-treatment measure to assess their use of impression management behaviors in the criterion interview using a revised version of the impression management scale from Kristof-Brown et al. (2002).

Employer interview ratings. The dependent variable, interview performance ratings, was measured by recruiter ratings on a standard suitability form, which was modified from Stevens and Kristof's (1995) rating form. The four items in the overall suitability measure were averaged into a single interview rating.

Interview Protocol

As discussed in Campion, Palmer and Campion (1998), structured interviews asking the same questions of each candidate and developing questions based on a job analysis increases the validity of the job interview. This process ensures the interview is job related and protects against both interview deficiency, where relevant information about the candidate is omitted from the interview, and interview contamination, which introduces irrelevant information about the candidate. Because the candidates in this study represent a broad selection of fields, creating interview content from job analyses is not feasible. Instead, a review of the literature was conducted to identify valid topics or sample questions that could be adopted for this study. The results of this search and the process of developing an interview protocol for the present study are discussed next.

Campion, Palmer and Campion (1998) recommend the use of standard, quality questions. Quality questions are those that (a) pose hypothetical situations (situational interview questions), (b) elicit answers describing past behaviors (behavioral description

interview questions), (c) address the candidate's background (general questions), and (d) questions that require the candidate to demonstrate specific job knowledge. *Situational interview questions* focus on future behavior by asking candidates what they *would* do in a given hypothetical situation (Latham, Saari, Pursell, & Campion, 1980). *Behavioral description interview questions*, developed by Janz (1982), focus on past behaviors by asking candidates to recount their actions when faced with a given situation. *General questions* do not require the candidate to discuss specific situations as with SI and BDI questions, but are often included in employment interviews (Conway & Peneno, 1999). General questions may probe the candidate's experience and goals or assess the candidate's motivation for the job. Finally, specific job knowledge questions might ask candidates to discuss their knowledge of the job or organization or might mimic work samples by requiring candidates to perform a specific job function (Campion, Palmer, & Campion, 1998). Because these interviews will span a variety of job types, it is impractical to ask questions about specific job knowledge. The other three types, however, will be included in the interview protocol. A mixture of question types is recommended by Conway and Peneno (1999), who argue that including SI, BDI and general questions in the same interview can increase construct coverage, thereby increasing construct validity, and produce more positive candidate reactions.

Campion, Palmer and Campion (1998) summarized characteristics of typical interviews designed for interview research. The average number of interview questions was 16.5 questions (*SD* = 8.7), with most interviews ranging from 15 to 20 questions. Average interview length was 39 minutes (*SD* = 25.8) with the majority of interviews

lasting 30 to 60 minutes. To honor the time commitment of volunteer employers and maintain a consistent interview schedule, each interviewer in the present study received a standard list of 15 questions to ask in a consistent order. The interview ended at 30 minutes, whether or not all questions have been addressed. Brief follow-up questions were allowed if the candidate's initial answer was unclear. Ratings were made at the end of the interview as global evaluations of each candidate, rather than rating individual questions.

In a meta-analysis, Huffcott, Roth, Conway and Stone (2001) identified seven common psychological constructs that appear most often in employment interview research. These constructs include, in order of frequency of use in the literature: personality traits (agreeableness and emotional stability), social skills (leadership, interpersonal skills and communication skills), mental capacity (including general mental ability, problem solving and creativity), declarative and procedural knowledge and skills related to the target job, interests and preferences, and organizational fit.

As described in the subjects section, the participants in this study represented potential candidates from a variety of career industries, including manufacturing settings (industrial maintenance, electrical and mechanical engineering), business settings (office management, accounting, management), and human services professions (child development, psychology, criminal justice). As such, the interview questions needed to be selected based on their relevance to the diverse career fields represented in this study. Conscientiousness is cited as the strongest personality predictor of job performance across jobs (Barrick, Mount, & Strauss, 1993) and is an obvious choice to include here.

Assembling the information just discussed into a strategy to devise an interview protocol for the present study produced the following framework. The four most commonly used interview dimensions from Huffcott, Roth, Conway and Stone (2001) - personality, social skills, mental capacity, and knowledge and skills - were adopted for use in this study. Interview questions identified from the literature reviewed here and from the popular press were then matched to appropriate categories to develop the criterion interview protocol. This process was repeated to develop the practice interview protocol.

Procedure

After completing the initial on-line measure that includes demographics, the CSE measure and the MASI anxiety measure, 75% of participants were randomly selected to receive an email instructing them to sign up for a practice interview on the PerfectInterview program, with the remaining 25% assigned to the control group. Treatment group participants received a list of available practice interview times during a three week period immediately preceding the mock interview day. To help the career center staff manage the treatment groups and to ensure the participants in each group were treated similarly, treatment groups were assigned by day. For example, the participants who attended interviews on the first day of practice interviews were assigned to the same condition. Participants received a reminder email the day before their practice interview. No-shows were contacted and asked to reschedule their practice interview, which then assigned them to the treatment group attending that day. Any subjects who did not participate in the practice interview became part of the control group.

When the applicant arrived for the practice interview, the experimenter read the directions for completing the practice interview on the PerfectInterview system. The practice group completed the PerfectInterview mock interview and were informed that they would not see the results. To increase a sense of anxiety and to ensure the participants completed the task, they were told that a career counselor would review their interview later. After the practice interview, participants completed the Candidate Reactions measure.

Members of the coaching condition completed the practice interview and were told that a counselor would critique the interview with them. Immediately after the interview, the counselor and participant watched the interview. The counselor then shared with the participant his/her feedback based on the Interview Feedback Form, recommending changes in behavior to improve interview skills. Finally, participants in this condition completed the Candidate Reactions measure.

Student participants were assigned to conduct the criterion interview with employer participants in their field of interest whenever possible. This design was expected to increase both the fidelity of the study and participant anxiety because many participants are currently seeking or will soon be seeking employment in the local area with similar employers. Student participants received an email and phone call reminder of their participation in the study the day before mock interview day. Upon arrival for the criterion interview, participants completed the anxiety measure (McCarthy & Goffin, 2004). After the interview, the participants completed the manipulation check, the IM-candidate measure, the candidate reaction measure and received the debriefing form.

Upon arrival at mock interview day, employer participants received an interview schedule and signed their consent forms. Interviewers received the standard list of questions to ask of all participants, which included a mixture of situational and behaviorally based interview questions. While interviewers would normally receive candidate resumes in advance of the interview, for this study recruiters did not see the interviewees' resumes because of the risk of forming impressions based on the resume rather than the interview (Campion, Palmer and Campion, 1998). As Jelf (1999) noted, interviewers make preliminary judgments about applicant qualifications and reinforce those during the interview. Therefore, interviewers were provided with no information about the student participants. Immediately after each interview, interviewers completed the employer interview ratings form and the impression management-employer measure.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

The first round of data collection began in August, 2011. Commitment was received from three instructors of psychology and two instructors of English to offer the research study as extra credit. A total of 450 students, from 15 different classes, were asked to participate in the study. When possible, the author visited the class to explain the general purpose of the study and encourage participation. Students joining the study (N = 115) completed the initial instruments via a Zoomerang.com survey, which included demographic information, the CSES, and the MASI interview anxiety scale. Participant recruitment occurred for three weeks, from late August to mid-September, 2011, to be referred to throughout these results as data collection "time one."

After their initial survey was submitted, participants received an invitation to schedule an appointment at the campus career center. Of the initial participants, 78 participated in a career center visit. Participants were randomly assigned to groups based on the date and time of their appointment. The date and time assigned to each treatment group was rotated during the four weeks of career center appointments to ensure students' class schedules did not affect the random assignment. Career center appointments concluded in early November, 2011, to be called data collection "time two" in these results.

In mid-November, 2011, ten employer volunteers visited campus to conduct final criterion interviews with the student participants (N = 53). All of the interviews were conducted in the same large room, with employers stationed at different tables. Student

participants were matched with employer participants on industry as closely as possible to increase the psychological realism of the interview. Employers followed a standard interview protocol developed for this study and rated the candidates after the interview. Student participants reported their interview anxiety in the waiting area immediately before the interview and completed the final impression management report and candidate reaction scale after the interview concluded. This portion of data collection is called “time three”.

Due to the low response rate, another round of data collection was conducted in January and June, 2012. Five additional psychology courses and one English class (135 total students) were invited to participate in the study in lieu of completing an alternate class assignment. A total of 70 students completed the initial survey, which was administered in paper format. These participants were then personally contacted during class to sign up for a career center appointment. Participants (N = 67) completed the career center appointment. The same scheme for random assignment employed during the first round of data collection was used to make random assignments to group based on appointment date and time.

Two of the career center staff who were former human resources professionals and one of the employers from the first round of data collection served as the employer interviewers for the final criterion interview. The interviewers followed the same interview protocol and were blind to the participants’ group assignments. Neither of the career center professionals had interacted with the participants in a previous stage of the study (i.e. the coaching group was administered by a third career center professional). All

student participants completed this final round of the study, bringing the combined sample size to $N = 120$.

Participants ranged in age from 18 to 55 ($M = 25.1$). The sample was 55% female and predominantly white (81%), with African American (10.7%) and Hispanic (4.1%) making up the largest minority groups. These demographics are representative of the population from which the sample was drawn; the college student population was 56.7% female and 80.4% white in fall 2011 ("Tri-County Technical College Opening Fall Enrollment Data…", n.d.). Participants reported previously participating in zero to 50 interviews ($M = 5.3$). Most of the participants had previously had a part-time job (74%), about half had previously held a full-time job (52%) and a small percentage had previously conducted an internship or co-operative education experience (10%). Only 5.8% of participants reported having no previous work experience.

The length of previous work experience varied throughout the sample: 22.3% had less than two years of work experience, 22.3% reported two to five years of experience, while 25.6% had accumulated six to ten years of experience. This sample includes adult learners (upper age range of 55 years), with 6.6% reporting 11 to 15 years of work experience and 16.5% of the sample reporting more than 15 years of experience.

The data was analyzed to determine if any demographic variables had a significant relationship with the dependent variables of interest. Only years of work experience emerged as a possible confounding variable; there was a significant main effect for years of experience on interview ratings ($F(4,115) = 2.96$, $p < .05$). The pattern of the means revealed significantly lower mean ratings for participants with less than two

years of work experience compared to the mean ratings of the other levels of work experience. None of the other demographic variables were significantly related to interview ratings.

The data was analyzed to determine if any significant differences emerged between participants who completed the study and those who dropped out at an earlier stage. There were no differences in demographics between those who completed the study and those who did not, except in regard to gender. At the start of the study, the sample was 68% female. More males dropped out at the next stage, leaving the ratio after the career center round at 78% female. However, females dropped out before the next stage to a greater degree, resulting in the final sample of 55% female. The measures collected at time one were analyzed to confirm there were no differences between groups on CSES or interview anxiety. Likewise, the candidate reactions to the treatment condition at time two did not differ between those who completed the study and those who withdrew. A complete table of descriptive data is available in Table 3.1.

Items were reverse scored where appropriate (CSES, MASI at time 1 and MASI at time 2). Next, scale scores were created and evaluated for internal reliability for all independent and dependent variables. The result of these analyses are presented on the diagonal in Table 3.1. Scores on all primary independent and dependent variables were compared to the generally accepted alpha of .70.

The interview realism scale consists of three items intended to serve as a manipulation check designed to evaluate the authenticity of the interview setting. After the final interview (time three), candidates responded to three items: (a) This interview

felt like a real interview, (b) I behaved as if this was a real interview, and (c) I felt nervous during the interview. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .22. The item "I felt nervous during this interview" received consistently low endorsements, reaching a mean of 2.85 on a 5 point scale. Although some participants were nervous (*SD* = 1.16), the average participant reported limited nervousness during the interview. By deleting this item, alpha could be improved to .53. Investigating the distribution of responses, range restriction was observed for two items. For one item (this interview felt like a real interview), skew (-.70) was divided by the standard error (.22) to yield -3.18, which is outside the generally accepted limits of +/- 2 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). On the second item (behaved as if this was a real interview), both skew (-.72) and kurtosis (1.16) were outside the normal range. This range restriction confines the variance in the scale, limiting the strength of the internal reliability statistics. Even though participants did not report strong feelings of nervousness during the criterion interview, the strong negative skew of these two items demonstrates the consistent endorsement by participants that the lab setting of the study closely simulated a real interview.

The candidate reaction scales measuring the perceived usefulness of the interview training protocol (utility reactions) and the perceived enjoyment of experiencing the training condition (affective reactions) also warrant closer examination. Candidates rated the perceived usefulness of the interview training program at time 2, immediately after experiencing the training (i.e., "today's career center visit will improve my interview skills"), and again at time 3, immediately after the criterion interview (i.e., "the practice/coaching session helped me perform well in today's interview"). The utility

reactions produced an alpha that exceeded .90 at both time 2 and time 3. The affective reactions scales, however, demonstrate weak internal reliability. These four items asked if (a) the candidate enjoyed the treatment/interview session, (b) participating in the treatment/interview session was fun, (c) the candidate was nervous during the treatment/interview session, (d) if the treatment session will help/helped the candidate feel more at ease during a future interview. The low initial alpha scores calculated with all items (T1 alpha = .40, T3 alpha = .37) identified the third item to be removed (alpha if removed T1 = .67, T3 = .76). The three-item composite score for affective reaction was calculated and was used through the remainder of the analyses.

Next, data were screened for outliers using visual inspection of scatter plots and calculations of multivariate outlier statistics. Four records were identified by scatter plots as potential outliers. To determine the multivariate impact of these cases, Mahalanobis distance found two cases that exceeded the critical value. Next, discrepancy on the dependent variable was analyzed by calculating studentized deleted residuals, resulting in three cases exceeding the generally acceptable cutoff of -2. Finally, global influence on both the independent and dependent variables was evaluated by calculating Cook's D, DFFITS, and DFBetas. None of these calculations produced outliers of concern. The original data was consulted to confirm the cases that were flagged by the leverage investigation were entered correctly. These were determined to be real, albeit rare, values in the current sample distribution. All cases will be maintained in the dataset.

Employer representatives (N = 11) conducted the final criterion interviews. These professionals represented industries that are potential employment opportunities for the

student participants, including manufacturing (N = 2), business (N = 3), education (N = 4), healthcare (N = 1) and non-profit (N = 1). The interviewers were trained human resources professionals who conduct interviews as part of their job responsibilities. Interviewing experience ranged from five to 35 years, with an average experience of 18.8 years.

The employer participants conducted criterion interviews with between three and 35 student participants (M = 6.3 interviews per employer). To determine if the interview ratings were a function of the interviewer, that is, if there is nesting of data with candidates at level one and interviewers at level two, the ICC1 was calculated using the mixed command in SPSS (appropriate for groups of unequal size). The grand mean suitability rating across all candidates and all interviewers was 3.51 (5 point scale). The intercept variance was non-significant, meaning the group means do not differ significantly from the grand mean. The residual, or within group variance, of 1.16 was significant. To calculate ICC1, the intercept variance was divided by the total variance (the sum of the residual and intercept variances), which derived a score of .18. This means that 18% of the variance in interview ratings is due to the difference between raters; the interviewer to whom the candidate was assigned has a small influence on the interview ratings.

Multi-level modeling requires suitability ratings to be aggregated to the group level. In order to support this transformation, however, the ICC2 must be calculated to provide evidence of reliability at the group level. The results of an ANOVA with suitability as the dependent variable and interviewer identification number as the

independent variable were used to calculate the ICC2. The mean square within groups was subtracted from the mean square between groups, the difference of which was divided by the mean square between groups, producing an ICC2 of .65. This score should be interpreted in a similar manner to Cronbach's alpha: scores below .70 indicate that suitability ratings within rater may not be similar enough to be considered reliable at the group level.

In addition to testing for reliability at the group level, aggregating scores also requires tests for agreement at level two using the r_{wg} statistic, which compares the observed group variance to an expected group variance. In calculating r_{wg}, the group variances are pooled across groups, so it is assumed that these variances are homogenous. To test this assumption, Levene's Test for homogeneity of variance was conducted and determined to be significant ($F = 3.88$), which means variances are not equal across groups, providing some evidence that the r_{wg} may not be reliable. The MS error obtained from conducting an ANOVA with interviewer as the grouping variable and suitability ratings as the dependent variable was used in the $r_{wg(p)}$ formula ($r_{wg} = .42$). The r_{wg} is an indication of within group correlation and has been interpreted using the same range as other correlations; scores above .70 indicate evidence to justify aggregation to the group level (James et al., 1984). Given that (a) only 18% of the differences between suitability ratings is attributable to the interviewer, (b) the ICC2 demonstrates low internal reliability, and (c) the low r_{wg} shows low within group correlation, it can be concluded that significant nesting of scores within rater did not occur.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: Training manipulation will have a significant effect on suitability ratings, such that the coaching condition will receive higher interview ratings than the practice condition, which will in turn receive higher ratings than the control condition.

An ANOVA was performed with treatment group as the IV and group-mean-centered suitability ratings as the DV. The results were non-significant (F (2, 118) = 1.74). Candidates in the practice group scored slightly lower (M = 3.06), on average, than the control group (M = 3.20). As predicted, the coaching group received the highest average ratings *(*M = 3.54), but the difference between groups was non-significant.

The ANOVA was calculated again with work experience as a covariate in the equation. The main effects approached significance (F(3,116) = 2.28, p = .08). The paired comparison results revealed significant mean differences between the coaching (M = 3.54) and practice (M = 3.10) groups. The control group (M = 3.20) was not significantly different from the other two groups, as depicted in Figure 3.1

H1b: Training condition will be positively related to both affective and utility reaction measures, with the coaching condition receiving more positive reactions than the practice condition.

The mean scores on the affective and utility scales at time two (immediately after the treatment intervention) and at time three (immediately after the criterion interview) were as follows: Affective means were 4.02 and 4.06 for time 2 and time 3 respectively; Utility means were 4.02 and 3.71 for time 2 and time 3, respectively. Two one-way ANOVAs were run with treatment group as the factor and affective reactions and utility

reactions as the dependent variables. There was a significant difference in affective reactions between groups at Time 2 (F (2, 111) = 4.93), with the coaching group reporting significantly higher affective reactions (M = 4.27) compared to both the control group (M = 3.91) and the practice group (M = 3.91). There was no difference in affective reactions between the control and practice groups. At Time, 3 the ANOVA was non-significant (F (2, 117) = 2.25), but the coaching group (M = 4.22) again showed a significant mean difference in affective reaction compared to the practice group (M = 3.94). The control group (M = 4.04) was not significantly different from the other groups (Figure 3.2).

There was a significant difference in utility reactions between groups at time two (F (2, 111) = 7.95) with the coaching group (M = 4.31) reporting a significantly higher utility reactions compared to the practice condition (M = 4.20), which in turn was significantly higher than the control group (M = 3.75). At time three, there was again a significant difference in utility reactions (F (2, 117) = 5.61) with significantly higher utility reactions for the coaching condition (M = 4.02) compared to both the practice (M = 3.68) and control (M = 3.47) groups. There was no significant difference between the practice and control groups at time three (Figure 3.3).

H2a: Interview anxiety will be negatively related to interview ratings.

Interview ratings were regressed onto candidate anxiety measured at time one. These results were non-significant (r = .05, n.s.). The regression was repeated, using anxiety scores measured at time three, immediately before the criterion interview. Again, the results were non-significant (r = .15, n.s.).

H2b: All three subcomponents of interview anxiety (communication, performance, and social) will be negatively related to interview performance.

Multiple regression was used to analyze the relationship between the three subcomponents of anxiety (independent variables) and interview ratings (dependent variable). The multiple regression at time one (R = .11, n.s.) and the betas for each scale were non-significant ($B_{communication}$ = -.07, B_{social} = -.21, $B_{performance}$ = .19). At time three, results were again non-significant (R = .17, $B_{communication}$ = -.22, B_{social} = -.20, $B_{performance}$ = .13, n.s.).

RQ1: How do the treatment conditions influence interview anxiety?

Mean interview anxiety was calculated at time one and time three (M_1 = 2.43, M_3 = 2.56). The mean anxiety score was expected to increase from time one to time three because time one was measured outside of an interview setting while time three was measured immediately before the criterion interview, which should have primed the salience of the participants' interview anxiety. A paired-sample t-test reveals there is a significant increase in anxiety from time one to time three (t = -3.34).

The results of a one-way ANOVA showed there was no significant difference in anxiety between treatment groups at time one, which confirms that random assignment to groups created groups that did not differ in anxiety at the start of the study. Likewise, an ANOVA of anxiety measured at time 3, immediately before the criterion interview, revealed no significant difference in anxiety between treatment groups.

A repeated measures ANOVA was performed with anxiety as the two-level within subjects factor (time 1 and time 3) and treatment group as the between subjects

variable. Results revealed a significant increase in anxiety from time one to time three (F (1, 114) = 11.24). The anxiety by group interaction term revealed no differences in the rate of anxiety increase between groups (F (2, 114) = .42). While the research question was unable to predict whether the treatment condition would have an exaggerating or buffering effect on anxiety, these results show that all groups increased in anxiety as they approached the interview, regardless of treatment condition.

RQ2: How do the treatment conditions influence the three subcomponents of interview anxiety?

Paired-sample t-tests revealed mean anxiety scores increased significantly from time one to time three for communications and social anxiety, and approached significance for performance anxiety, as demonstrated in Table 3.2. Repeated measures ANOVA with the change in anxiety from time one to time three as the within persons variable and treatment condition as the between persons variable demonstrated no difference in the rate of change in the subcomponents of anxiety between groups; communications and social anxiety increased regardless of training condition.

H3a: Core self-evaluations will be positively related to interview performance.

Interview scores were regressed onto core self-evaluation scores. The results were significant (r = .19), indicating that candidates with higher core self-evaluation scores received higher interview ratings.

H3b: Core self-evaluations will moderate the relationship between treatment condition and interview performance.

The General Linear Model was used to test the moderating effect of CSE on the relationship between treatment group and interview ratings. The main effects were significant for CSE (F (1, 116) = 3.97) but were not significant for treatment group (F (2, 116) = 1.32). The interaction term for treatment group and CSE was not significant (F (2, 114) = 1.00), indicating the relationship between treatment group and suitability is not dependent on a candidate's CSE.

H3c: There will be a negative relationship between c and interview anxiety.

Anxiety measured at time one was regressed onto CSE scores (r = - .37). The results were negative and statistically significant; as CSE scores increased, interview anxiety scores decreased. Likewise, anxiety measured at time three was regressed onto CSE scores (r = -.41) and again the results were negative and statistically significant.

Correlations between CSE and anxiety subscales revealed a significant relationship between CSE and each of the three subscales measured at time one and time three (see Table 3.1).

H4a: Participant's use of assertive verbal impression management strategies will be positively related to interview ratings.

Assertive verbal impression management strategies include verbal self-promotion and verbal ingratiation. Two measures of impression management behaviors were gathered, one from the point of view of the interviewer, and one as a self-report measure from the candidates. There was a small significant positive correlation between candidates' reports of their behavior and interviewers' perception of those behaviors, ranging from r = .32 (verbal self-promotion) to r = .37 (nonverbal). The correlation was

non-significant for verbal ingratiation behaviors (r = .14). Paired sample t-tests show that interviewers gave consistently lower scores for the occurrence of these behaviors compared to candidate self-ratings (Table 3.3).

Interview performance ratings were regressed onto verbal self-promotion, verbal ingratiation, and nonverbal behaviors performed by the candidate, *as rated by the employer* after the criterion interview, revealing a statistically significant relationship (model R = .90; see Table 3.4).

Next, interview performance ratings were regressed onto *candidate self-reports* of verbal self-promotion, verbal ingratiation, and nonverbal behaviors performed in the interview. The results were significant (model R = .33; see Table 3.4).

In a post hoc analysis, interview ratings were regressed onto the three employer-rated impression management scales using stepwise regression. This analysis finds the most parsimonious combination of predictors to account for the relationship present in the model. The results (R = .90) reveal that verbal self-promotion carries the strongest weight (B = .86), followed by non-verbal behaviors (B = .30) while ingratiation behaviors (B = .03) fail maintain a significant relationship with suitability ratings. In a second stepwise regression using candidate-rated impression management behaviors, nonverbal behaviors holds the strongest relationship with interview ratings (B = .51), while self-promotion (B = .17) and verbal ingratiation (B = -.01) are excluded from the overall model (R = .30).

H4b: Impression management will partially mediate the relationship between anxiety and interview performance.

There was no significant relationship between anxiety and interview performance, so a mediating effect cannot exist. However, to test the direct relationship between interview anxiety and impression management behaviors, correlations were performed between interview anxiety measured at time three and impression management behavior (as measured by both the employer and the candidate). When reported by the employer, neither the full impression management scale nor the three IM subscales (verbal self-promotion, verbal ingratiation, nonverbal) were significantly related to overall candidate interview anxiety. The communication anxiety subscale, however, was significantly related to the full scale employer-rated IM behaviors (r = -.21) and to employer-rated verbal self-promotion behaviors (r = -.19). Verbal ingratiation and nonverbal subscales were unrelated to anxiety. When impression management behaviors were self-reported by the candidate, overall IM was significantly related to interview anxiety (r = -.19). Only the verbal self-promotion scale as reported by the candidate was related to interview anxiety (r = -.19); verbal ingratiation and nonverbal subscales were unrelated.

A follow-up ANOVA was conducted to measure the effect of treatment condition on the demonstration of IM behaviors. There was no significant main effects for treatment condition on either candidate or employer reported overall IM behaviors. However, there was a main effect for treatment condition on interviewer ratings of candidate nonverbal IM behaviors (F (2, 118) = 3.18). Specifically, the coaching condition received significantly higher mean ratings of nonverbal IM behaviors (M = 4.19) compared to the practice (M = 3.7) and control (M = 3.8) conditions. There were no differences in nonverbal behavior ratings between the practice and control conditions.

Likewise, no differences between treatment conditions emerged for the verbal self-promotion or verbal ingratiation IM subscales.

H5: Core self-evaluations will be positively related to impression management behaviors.

The full impression management scale, as rated by the candidate, was regressed onto candidates' CSE, yielding significant results (r = .23). Follow-up tests demonstrated that candidate CSE is a significant predictor of candidate-rated verbal ingratiation behaviors (r = .21), but not for the other two IM subscales. The full impression management scale, as reported by interviewers, was regressed onto candidates' CSE, again with significant results (r = .19). Additional tests showed candidate CSE was a significant predictor of verbal self-promotion behaviors as rated by the interviewer (r = .20), but did not significantly predict the other two IM scales as rated by the interviewer.

A graphical representation of the relationships described in the full model is available in Figure 3.4.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of practice and feedback on candidates' job interview performance. Despite the widely accepted expectations that candidates will experience an interview as part of the hiring process, little research has identified the best ways for candidates to prepare for the interview (Maurer & Solamon, 2006). Specifically, although a variety of interview training programs are available, including role-play interview practice and coaching feedback sessions, research has not compared the differential effects of such programs (Burris & Ryan, 1989). The current study examined the effects of interview practice and feedback on candidates' job interview performance while also considering the effects of the individual difference variables core self-evaluation and interview anxiety. Overall interview performance along with specific impression management behaviors and candidate reaction to training conditions were examined as outcomes.

Training conditions included an active control group that participated in a job-search activity, the practice group that conducted a practice interview with an interactive computer interview system, and the coaching group that conducted the practice computer interview and received feedback from a professional career counselor about their interview performance. The coaching group was expected to receive the highest final interview ratings, followed by the practice group and then the control group. This hypothesis was supported by the data when years of work experience was used a covariate. In other words, when years of previous work experience was held constant, the

coaching condition produced higher interview ratings compared to the practice condition. Given that previous work experience has a significant main effect on interview ratings, candidates with the least amount of work experience stand to gain the most benefit from participating in an interview coaching program.

Candidate reactions to interview training programs have appeared throughout the literature as a measure of effectiveness of interview training. Candidate reactions have been divided into affective reactions (i.e., enjoyment of training) and utility reactions (i.e., how much they learned). Both affective and utility reactions were expected to differ between groups, with the coaching group receiving the highest ratings, followed by the practice and then the control groups. These reaction measured were gathered immediately after the treatment condition (called "time two") and again immediately after the criterion interview ("time three"). At time two, there was a significant difference in affective reactions; participants in the coaching condition reported the highest average enjoyment of the training experience compared to both the practice and control groups, between which no difference emerged. At time three, participants were asked to think back to their training experience and again rate their enjoyment of the experience. At this measurement point, although the overall results were non-significant, the coaching group did report significantly higher affective reactions compared to the practice only group. The control group did not differ from either of the other groups. These results suggest that training programs that include feedback to participants will be more enjoyable over time compared to programs that merely require practice with no feedback.

In considering utility reactions immediately after the training experience, a significant difference emerged between groups in the expected direction; the coaching group found the experience more useful than the practice group, which in turn reported higher utility ratings compared to the active control group. At time three, there was again an overall significant difference in utility measures, with the coaching group demonstrating significantly higher ratings compared to the practice and control groups. At time three, the practice and control groups did not differ in their utility ratings. Over time, participants who received feedback on their practice interview thought the experience would be more helpful in improving their interview performance compared to participants who did not receive feedback.

Despite previous research identifying a link between candidate anxiety and interview performance (Ayres, Keereetaweep, Chen & Edwards, 1998; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004), no significant relationship was found in the present study between interview performance and either the overall anxiety measure or the communication anxiety, social anxiety and performance anxiety subscales. The laboratory nature of this study, conducted in a psychologically safe environment, might have minimized the interview anxiety experienced by candidates. In the manipulation check, although candidates reported that this interview felt like a real interview, the mean level of reported nervousness prior to the final criterion interview was below the midpoint of the scale. Even though the final interviews were conducted by real employers in fields of interest to the job candidates, knowing that they were not being critiqued for a real job might have limited the anxiety experienced by the candidate.

The previous research was unclear about the possible effects of treatment condition on interview anxiety. At time one, participants responded to the interview anxiety measure outside of an interview setting; this could be considered a measure of trait interview anxiety. Interview anxiety measured at time one was equal across groups, as expected by the nature of random assignment. Conceptually, the interview training intervention could have decreased – or possibly even increased – interview anxiety. Practicing an interview and receiving feedback on that practice might have helped candidates feel at ease with the interview process. Conversely, this practice and feedback might have primed feelings of inadequacy, which might have increased their interview anxiety. At time three, anxiety was measured as the participants awaited their final interview, which could be interpreted as a state anxiety measure. Overall, anxiety increased from time one to time three within person, as might be expected; anxiety would be expected to be higher in the face of a looming interview compared to the anxiety felt at the mere anticipation of a distant interview. There was no difference in anxiety between groups measured at time three, however, showing that the individual training conditions neither enhanced nor buffered anxiety compared to the other training groups.

Looking deeper into the type of anxiety that increased from time one to time three revealed that communications and social anxiety increased, but performance anxiety did not. The rate of change in interview anxiety was not dependent on treatment condition; communications and social anxiety increased from time one to time three regardless of treatment condition.

CSE, which includes self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability, was hypothesized to be negatively related to interview anxiety. This hypothesis was supported. Results were significant and negative in direction; as CSE increased, interview anxiety decreased. This relationship held true for anxiety measured at both time one and time three. Analyzing the subscales of anxiety revealed a consistent similar significant negative relationship between CSE and all three anxiety subscales, both at time one and time three.

Previous research has found CSE to be related to a number of job-related outcomes, including job performance and work motivation (Judge, 2009). It was hypothesized that CSE would affect interview performance in the present study, which was supported. As candidate CSE increased, their interview performance increased. In addition, CSE was expected to influence the relationship between treatment condition and interview performance, but the interaction effects were not significant.

The present study demonstrates the robust nature of CSE. There are no mean differences in CSE in the demographic variables – age, race, and gender – that commonly lead to bias in other selection tools. Given the strong relationship to both interview ratings demonstrated here and to job performance ratings demonstrated in the literature, CSE appears to be an individual difference variable worthy of inclusion in employer selection systems. In fact, the strength of the correlation in the present study (r = .19) between CSE and interview performance is nearly identical to the correlation between CSE and job performance presented in Judge and Bono's (2001) meta-analysis,

reinforcing Judge and Bono's proposal that CSEs should be considered in both selection decisions and in models of job performance.

Just as validity for personality measures increases when linked with specific job tasks (Levy, 2010), CSE may have differential effectiveness as a selection tool for specific job families. For example, hiring employees high in CSE might be most important in knowledge industries that require employees to independently manage their work behaviors and results. Although it is difficult to imagine high CSE damaging employee performance, it is conceivable that there are some settings where CSE scores beyond some upper limit actually relate to lower performance. Additional research is needed to determine if such a downturn in performance at the highest levels of CSE is present in specific industries. Even if an upper limit emerges, this would only add utility to the inclusion of CSE in selection systems.

Studies have consistently shown that candidates who use impression management behaviors receive higher interview ratings (Stevens & Kristof, 1995). As such, it was hypothesized that impression management behaviors would be related to interview ratings. Impression management behaviors were reported by both the candidate and the interviewer immediately after the final interview. Interviewer reports of IM behavior accounted for 82% of the variance in interview ratings when all three subscales of impression management were included in the multiple regression. Both verbal self-promotion and nonverbal impression management skills demonstrated a significant positive relationship with interview ratings, while ingratiation behaviors did not. Although this relationship may be partly due to common method bias, it supports the

previous research that impression management behaviors are related to interview performance (Ellis et al., 2002; McFarland et al., 2002; Peeters & Lievens, 2006; Stevens & Kristof, 1995; Van Iddekinge et al., 2007).

Although much weaker in effect size, candidate-reported impression management behaviors were also significantly related to interview ratings in the multiple regression that included all three impression management subscales. None of the subscales alone accounted for significant variance in interview ratings when entered in a simple regression.

The stepwise regression results, although potentially over-fitting the model, show that candidate nonverbal behaviors are most strongly related to interview performance ratings. The employer-rated impression management behaviors revealed that verbal self-promotion and then nonverbal behaviors were most predictive of interview ratings. One possible explanation is that while candidates are generally aware of and perform the correct nonverbal impression management behaviors in an interview setting, they are less prepared to effectively talk about their skills as they relate to the job, which would be evident in the verbal self-promotion scale. Employers, however, more strongly value verbal self-promotion skills – the candidate describing how his skills and experience relate to the job at hand – compared to the candidate's nonverbal behaviors.

An important measurement issue emerges with these results. Interview performance has a stronger relationship with impression management behaviors when those behaviors are rated by interviewers compared to candidates' self-ratings. Who accurately perceives these behaviors – the job seeker who performs them or the

interviewer who rates the performance? One possible explanation is a matter of perception; what candidates *think* they are doing might be different from what interviewers perceive is occurring. The direction of the mean differences suggests that candidates reported performing these behaviors more frequently than employers perceived. The results suggest that candidates might think they are demonstrating desirable interview behaviors, but these behaviors are not strong enough or frequent enough to be perceived by the interviewer. These results highlight the potential importance of emphasizing the acquisition of self-promotion behaviors during interview training programs.

Candidates may be cognitively attending to their interview performance and are not able to accurately recognize when they are actually performing these behaviors. Perhaps interviewers are trained to observe these behaviors and are therefore more alert to their occurrence, while candidates in this study encountering this construct for the first time might have overrepresented their performance of these behaviors. In other words, socially desirable responding might have encouraged the candidates to "fake good" on the impression management scale.

Although the final employer ratings measure did not require the employer to provide an overall score for each candidate, the employer might have developed an overall impression of the candidates and used this to endorse the impression management and interview performance ratings, regardless of the candidates' true impression management behaviors. This halo effect would explain why employer ratings of impression management correlate so strongly with interview ratings but not as strongly

with candidate-reported impression management behaviors. Indeed, although the halo effect or common method bias may be present, given that most interviews are conducted by a single interviewer, the relationship between that interviewer's perception of impression management behaviors and interview ratings may have the most practical value.

This pattern of results, when predictor and criterion ratings produced by a single source leads to stronger correlations between impression management and interview performance, mirrors meta-analytic results reporting correlations of .80 between impression management and interview ratings when these ratings are created from the same source. This correlation drops to .31 when the predictor is rated by a third party (Barrick, Shaffer, & DeGrassi, 2009). Future research should take care to specify in the operationalization of the impression management variable whether it is being self-rated by the candidate or as perceived by the interviewer, because the source of the rating seems to have a strong effect on the ratings that are produced and consequently on the strength of the relationship between impression management and other variables.

Post hoc tests were conducted to evaluate the relationship between anxiety and impression management behaviors in the criterion interview. There was no relationship between interviewer-rated impression management and candidate interview anxiety. However, results showed a significant negative relationship between anxiety and candidate-reported impression management behaviors; candidates reporting high interview anxiety immediately before the interview were less likely to perform impression management behaviors. Specifically, verbal self-promotion behaviors

maintained this correlation, but verbal ingratiation and non-verbal behaviors had no relationship with anxiety. Resource theory (Carver & Scheier, 1998) explains this negative relationship; candidates with high anxiety during the interview spend more resources on attending to that anxiety and have fewer remaining resources for impression management.

Were impression management behaviors learned as a result of treatment? The only significant relationship to emerge was that between treatment condition and nonverbal impression management behaviors as rated by the interviewer. The coaching group received significantly higher ratings of non-verbal impression management skills compared to both the practice and the control groups. There were no significant differences between the practice and control conditions. This suggests that the feedback received in the coaching condition may have helped candidates perform positive nonverbal interview behaviors, which are in turn related to interview performance ratings.

A final hypothesis suggested a relationship between core self-evaluation and impression management behaviors. This hypothesis was based on previous research showing impression management behaviors are related to stable individual difference variables (Peeters & Livens, 2006; Van Iddekinge, et al., 2007). When rated by the candidate, impression management behaviors – specifically verbal ingratiation – were significantly related to core self-evaluation. When rated by the employer, verbal self-promotion IM behaviors were significantly related to candidate core self-evaluation.

Limitations and Future Research

Although the pattern of means is somewhat consistent with the a priori predictions, with the coaching group receiving the highest interview ratings, the mean differences between groups failed to reach significance. The study's failure to find a significant effect for treatment group on interview performance might have been a function of low statistical power. Power analyses revealed approximately 60% power for the current study. To reach the generally desirable 80%, the required sample size would have increased to nearly 200, which was beyond the resources available for this study.

The study was designed to deliver maximum psychological realism: the participants were drawn primarily from career training programs and were matched with prospective employers in their industry. Even with this design, however, the participants did not report strong feelings of interview anxiety as they faced the final interview. It is possible that the laboratory nature of the study – knowing that there was no real job on the line – did not prime the candidate's anxiety, which limited the study's ability to identify a relationship between anxiety and interview performance. Future research using a field study with actual job interviews could potentially correct for this weak anxiety response. Lending support for the design of the study, however, is the strong endorsement of the remaining items comprising the interview realism scale; participants treated the study as a "real" interviewer and reportedly behaved as such. Also in support of the study design, recent meta-analytic results demonstrate that high-fidelity mock interviews and field studies produced similar relationships between self-presentation tactics and

interview ratings (Barrick, Shaffer & DeGrassi, 2009), thereby quieting criticism that lab studies are not generalizable to actual employment interviews (Jelf, 1999).

Conclusion

Interviews are an essential hurdle for any job applicant. A variety of training programs, from books to classes, are available to assist job candidates in their preparation. Practice and feedback stand out as training components that might help candidates improve their interview performance. Based on the results of this study, coaching emerges as a promising element to explain increases in interview performance. With significantly higher interview ratings for the coaching condition compared to the practice condition (when controlling for years of work experience), coupled with the significantly better nonverbal impression management behaviors demonstrated by candidates in the coaching condition, clearly this element stands to assist in improving candidates' interview performance.

In comparison, there is little evidence that merely practicing an interview helps to improve interview performance. First, there was no significant improvement in interview ratings for candidates who had more interview experience prior to the study; if practice alone helped to improve interview skills, these candidates should have received the highest interview ratings, which was not demonstrated in the data. In addition, after participating in the practice interview program, the practice condition did not demonstrate any significant differences from the control condition in interview performance.

Interesting relationships between anxiety, core self-evaluation and impression management skills emerged in the study. As discussed, core self-evaluation is related to

both interview anxiety and management behaviors, which in turn is linked to interview ratings. Impression management ratings differ when observed by interviewers or self-rated by candidates. Finally, job candidates perceived the deepest form of training – coaching – to be both the most enjoyable and the most helpful. The results of this study provide additional data to the otherwise limited field of research on the effectiveness of interview practice and coaching.

APPENDIX

Pre-interview candidate measures, administered via SurveyMonkey.com

Purpose
Thank you for participating in our study. This study is designed to understand what type of preparation for employment interviews are most effective. In this stage of the study, we will ask you some demographic questions about yourself, a series of questions pertaining to your personality, comfort level with interviews, and interpersonal communication skills. After you complete this form, you will be contacted about registering for the next stage of the study.

Duration
This questionnaire should take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. This study will take place during 4 weeks, but your participation will require only one or two appointments of about 30 minutes each.

Participant Rights
Participation is voluntary, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or hard feelings

Confidentiality
The data collected in this study will be only used for educational, learning, and research purposes and will be reported only in the aggregate, such that no individual information can be identified. Your name is used only to match your materials from different phases of the study and will be replaced with a unique participant number. Your individual responses will not be shared with anyone, including any other employees of the career center or any company/recruiting representatives. The demographic information is collected to allow us to learn about groups of people, not individuals.

Risks & Benefits
There are no known risks to those participating in this study, aside from any discomfort you may experience in participating in a practice job interview. Participant risk in this study is minimal, meaning that the risk of harm anticipated is not greater than that ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine psychological tasks. By participating in this study, you might benefit by improving your interview skills and having exposure to a real recruiter for your practice interview. We hope to learn more about preparation for interviews and improving interview ratings, which may help other individuals later on.

Contact information
If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, you are invited to contact the primary researcher, Dr. Pat Raymark at Clemson University (praymar@clemson.edu). If you have questions about this survey form or the next stage in the research project, please contact Kate Williams, Psychology Instructor, at kwilli23@tctc.edu.

By clicking ***Submit*** below, you are indicating that you have read the above information, are over 18 years of age, and agree to participate in the study until you decide otherwise.

Thank you!

Please answer these questions as honestly and completely as possible. Employers will have NO access to your responses. Only the researchers affiliated with this project will have access to your responses; career center staff will not review individual results.

About you

Name: _____ (Your name is used only to match your materials from different phases of the study and will be replaced with a unique participant number.)

Age: _____

Gender: ❑ Female ❑ Male

Race: ❑ African American ❑ Asian ❑ Hispanic ❑ Native American
❑ Pacific Islander ❑ White ❑ Multi-racial ❑ Other

Approximately how many interviews have you had? _____

Have you previously completed: (check all that apply)
❑ a part-time job ❑ an internship, co-op, or apprenticeship ❑ a full-time job ❑ none

Approximately how much work experience do you have? (Include any part-time and full-time work experience, regardless of relationship to your major or intended career goals)
- ❑ none
- ❑ less than 2 years
- ❑ 2 to 5 years
- ❑ 6 to 10 years
- ❑ 11 to 15 years
- ❑ more than 15 years

Please answer these questions as honestly and completely as possible. Employers will have NO access to your responses. Only the researchers affiliated with this project will have access to your responses; career center staff will not review individual results.

Instructions: Below are several statements about you with which you may agree or disagree. Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I am confident I get the success I deserve in life.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Sometimes I feel depressed. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
3	When I try, I generally succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Sometimes when I fail I feel worthless. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
5	I complete tasks successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Sometimes, I do not feel in control of my work. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
7	Overall, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am filled with doubts about my competence. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
9	I determine what will happen in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I do not feel in control of my success in my career. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
11	I am capable of coping with most of my problems.	1	2	3	4	5
12	There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me. (r)	1	2	3	4	5

r = reverse-scored. This measure is nonproprietary (free) and may be used without permission.

(CSES, Judge et al., 2003)

Instructions: Below are several statements about job interviews. Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item.

Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I become so apprehensive in job interviews that I am unable to express my thoughts clearly.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I get so anxious while taking job interviews that I have trouble answering questions that I know.	1	2	3	4	5
3	During job interviews, I often can't think of a thing to say.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I feel that my verbal communication skills are strong. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
5	During job interviews I find it hard to understand what the interviewer is asking me.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I find it easy to communicate my personal accomplishments during a job interview. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
7	While taking a job interview, I become concerned that the interviewer will perceive me as socially awkward.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I become very uptight about having to socially interact with a job interviewer.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I get afraid about what kind of personal impression I am making on job interviewers.	1	2	3	4	5
10	During a job interview, I worry that my actions will not be considered socially appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I worry about whether job interviewers will like me as a person.	1	2	3	4	5
12	When meeting a job interviewer, I worry that my handshake will not be correct.	1	2	3	4	5
13	In job interviews, I get very nervous about whether my performance is good enough.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly when I am in job interview situations.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I worry that my job interview performance will be lower than that of other applicants.	1	2	3	4	5
16	During a job interview, I am so troubled by thoughts of failing that my performance is reduced.	1	2	3	4	5
17	During a job interview, I worry about what will happen if I don't get the job.	1	2	3	4	5
18	While taking a job interview, I worry about whether I am a good candidate for the job.	1	2	3	4	5

(MASI; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004)

Thank you for completing this survey! You will be contacted about the next stage in this project.

Interview Feedback Form

Participant name: _____
Counselor name: _____

Please rate the candidate on the following elements of their interview performance. Consider the descriptions within each category when assigning an overall rating for that behavior.

Non-verbal communication	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**Average**	**Good**	**Very Good**	**N/A**
Manner of speaking *Vocal clarity/tone/pitch, Uses proper grammar/avoids slang terms, Uses action verbs and power language, Energy/enthusiasm level, Expresses ideas clearly/concisely*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Posture and mannerisms *Eye contact, Gestures, Friendly demeanor/smile, Attentiveness*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Avoided displays of anxiety or nervousness *Refrained from fidgeting*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Verbal communication	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**Average**	**Good**	**Very Good**	**N/A**
Level of information provided about skills *Articulates relevant skills and accomplishments*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Level of information provided about previous experience *Relates previous employment/transferrable skills*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Ability to respond to interviewer's questions *Provides examples to illustrate selling points, Highlights marketable skills/unique selling points*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Assertiveness and initiative *Emphasizes strengths, Offers additional information about skills/experience*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Self-confidence *Answers indicate a positive attitude, Conveys decision making ability, Smoothly answers difficult questions*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Honesty and openness *Answers are consistent with resume, Freely discusses weaknesses/ challenges*	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Name one strength demonstrated in the interview:

Name one weakness demonstrated in the interview:

Comments and recommendations for areas needing improvement:

Candidate Reactions

Please tell us about your experience with today's career center visit.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I enjoyed my career center visit today	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Participating in this program was fun	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I was nervous during my career center visit	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Today's career center visit will help me feel more at ease during future interviews	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Today's career center visit will help me perform well in future interviews	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Today's career center visit will improve my interview skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Today's career center visit will improve my effectiveness in upcoming interviews	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Today's career center visit will help me prepare for future interviews.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Employer Interview Ratings

Please complete this form after each interview.

Candidate name: _____

Please indicate the interviewee's performance on the following dimensions. (Employer ratings of Impression Management, adapted from Kristof-Brown et al. (2002))

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
During the interview, the candidate demonstrated his/her knowledge and expertise	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate described skills and abilities in an attractive way	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate took charge to get his/her point across	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate described skills and experience	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate discussed non–job-related topics	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate discussed interests we have in common	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate complemented me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate smiled a lot or used other friendly non-verbal behavior	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The candidate maintained eye contact with me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Indicate the suitability of this candidate, if this were an actual interview. (Overall interview performance ratings, adapted from Stevens & Kristof, 1995.)

	low ⟷				high
How qualified is this applicant for a job?	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
How attractive is this applicant as a potential employee for your organization?	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
How highly do you regard this candidate?	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
How well did this applicant do in the interview?	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Pre-interview Candidate Survey

Please answer these questions as honestly and completely as possible. Employers will have NO access to your responses. Only the researchers affiliated with this project will have access to your responses; career center staff will not review individual results.

Name: _____
(Your name is used only to match your materials from different phases of the study and will be replaced with a unique participant number.)

About your comfort with interviews
Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I become so apprehensive in job interviews that I am unable to express my thoughts clearly.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I get so anxious while taking job interviews that I have trouble answering questions that I know.	1	2	3	4	5
3	During job interviews, I often can't think of a thing to say.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I feel that my verbal communication skills are strong. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
5	During job interviews I find it hard to understand what the interviewer is asking me.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I find it easy to communicate my personal accomplishments during a job interview. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
7	While taking a job interview, I become concerned that the interviewer will perceive me as socially awkward.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I become very uptight about having to socially interact with a job interviewer.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I get afraid about what kind of personal impression I am making on job interviewers.	1	2	3	4	5
10	During a job interview, I worry that my actions will not be considered socially appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I worry about whether job interviewers will like me as a person.	1	2	3	4	5
12	When meeting a job interviewer, I worry that my handshake will not be correct.	1	2	3	4	5
13	In job interviews, I get very nervous about whether my performance is good enough.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly when I am in job interview situations.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I worry that my job interview performance will be lower than that of other applicants.	1	2	3	4	5
16	During a job interview, I am so troubled by thoughts of failing that my performance is reduced.	1	2	3	4	5
17	During a job interview, I worry about what will happen if I don't get the job.	1	2	3	4	5
18	While taking a job interview, I worry about whether I am a good candidate for the job.	1	2	3	4	5

(MASI; McCarthy & Goffin, 2004)

Post-interview Candidate Survey

1. Approximately how much time did you spend preparing for this interview?
   - ❑ None
   - ❑ Less than thirty minutes
   - ❑ Between thirty minutes and one hour
   - ❑ One to two hours
   - ❑ More than two hours

2. Your impressions of the interview (*MANIPULATION CHECK)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This interview felt like a real interview	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I behaved as if this was a real interview	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I felt nervous during the interview	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

3. About your interview behavior *(CANDIDATE IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
During the interview I demonstrated my knowledge and expertise	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I described my skills and abilities in an attractive way	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I took charge to get my point across	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I described my skills and experience	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I discussed non–job-related topics with the interviewer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I discussed interests I shared in common with the interviewer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I complemented the interviewer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I smiled a lot or used other friendly non-verbal behavior	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I maintained eye contact with the interviewer	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

4. About your reactions to the PREVIOUS practice or coaching session. *(POST-INTERVIEW CANDIDATE REACTIONS)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I enjoyed participating in the interview today	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Participating in the interview today was fun	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I was nervous during the interview today	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The practice/coaching session helped me feel more at ease during today's interview	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The practice/coaching session helped me perform well in today's interview	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The practice/coaching session improved my interview skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The practice/coaching session improved my effectiveness in today's interview	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The practice/coaching session helped me prepare for today's interview.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Criterion Interview Questions

Dimension	Type	Source	Question
Personality: Adapting to change	BDI	McKay (2009)	Give an example of how you have adjusted to unforeseen circumstances.
Personality: Conscientious, attendance	SI	Latham, et al. (1980)	Your spouse and two teenage children are sick in bed with a cold. There are no relatives or friends available to look in on them. Your shift starts in 3 hours. What would you do in this situation?
Personality: General	General	Bolles (1995)	What do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
Personality: Initiative, motivation	General	Veruki (2010)	What are your future ambitions?
Personality: Integrity	SI	Hansen (2009)	A co-worker tells you in confidence that she plans to call in sick while actually taking a week's vacation. What would you do and why?
Personality: Work habits	SI	Porot (2009)	Suppose you made a serious mistake at work. What would you do?
Social skills: Relating effectively with others	BDI	Campion, Campion, & Hudson (1994).	What is the biggest difference of opinion you ever had with a co-worker? How did it get resolved?
Social skills: Interacting with peers	BDI	Conway & Peneno (1999)	Tell me about a time when you had to help resolve a dispute between two of your peers. What did you do?
Mental capacity: Making decisions	BDI	McKay (2009)	Give an example of a quick decision you had to make.
Mental capacity: Planning, organizing & prioritizing SI	General	McKay (2009)	Have you ever been assigned several projects at the same time? How did you handle it?
Knowledge and skills: Safety	SI	www.careerchoiceguide.com	This company has a safety policy that states that when clients are in the office, at least two staff will work together. It is the end of the day, you are alone in the office and your colleagues did not lock the office door when they left for the day. An upset client walks in demanding help that you are not able to provide. How will you handle the situation?
Knowledge: General academic	General	Bolles, 1995	What college (or high school) subjects did you like best and least? Why?

Table 3.1

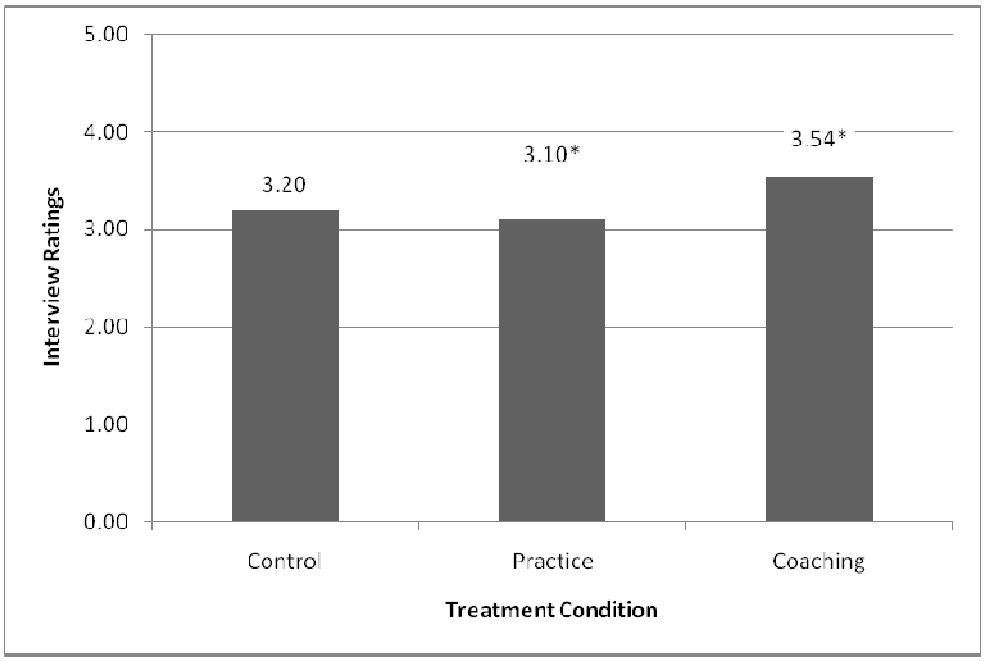
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations

		M	SD	1	2	2a	2b	2c	3	3a	3b	3c	4	4a	4b	4c	5	5a	5b	5c	6	6a	6b	7	7a	7b	8
1	**CSES**	3.79	.51	(.76)																							
2	**Anxiety T1**	2.43	.67	-.37**	(.91)																						
2a	Communication Anx T1	2.33	.61	-.28**	.71**	(.71)																					
2b	Social Anx T1	2.36	.79	-.36**	.92**	.54**	(.84)																				
2c	Performance Anx T1	2.56	.83	-.31**	.92**	.53**	.77**	(.87)																			
3	**Anxiety T3**	2.55	.65	-.41**	.83**	.57**	.76**	.78**	(.93)																		
3a	Communication Anx T3	2.52	.63	-.36**	.65**	.61**	.57**	.54**	.83**	(.75)																	
3b	Social Anx T3	2.49	.79	-.38**	.79**	.46**	.77**	.74**	.93**	.65**	(.87)																
3c	Performance Anx T3	2.65	.76	-.35**	.78**	.47**	.67**	.79**	.92**	.63**	.81**	(.86)															
4	**IM (Candidate)**	3.68	.48	.23*	-.08	-.15	-.05	-.04	-.19*	-.29**	-.10	-.14	(.75)														
4a	Verbal Self-promo (Cand)	3.97	.54	.08	-.02	-.19*	.02	.04	-.19*	-.30**	-.12	-.11	.80**	(.82)													
4b	Verbal Ingratiation (Cand)	3.05	.75	.21*	-.06	.02	-.03	-.11	-.09	-.10	-.02	-.12	.71**	.23	(.57)												
4c	Nonverbal (Cand)	4.07	.68	.15	-.03	-.10	-.07	.06	-.10	-.20*	-.05	-.03	.71**	.55**	.20*	(.73)											
5	**IM (Employer)**	3.12	.73	.19*	-.05	-.10	-.06	.03	-.16	-.21*	-.13	-.09	.32**	.30**	.14	.33**	(.87)										
5a	Verbal Self-promo (Empl)	3.35	.97	.20*	-.08	-.10	-.07	-.04	-.17	-.19*	-.14	-.13	.32**	.32**	.11	.32**	.90**	(.92)									
5b	Verbal Ingratiation (Empl)	2.33	.80	.09	.04	-.02	-.02	.12	-.10	-.06	-.02	.04	.15	.10	.14	.13	.67**	.34**	(.73)								
5c	Nonverbal (Empl)	3.89	.88	.13	.01	-.06	.01	.07	-.15	-.24	-.10	-.07	.32**	.31**	.09	.37**	.80**	.65**	.40**	(.71)							
6	**Candidate Reaction T2**	4.02	.55	.27**	.04	-.02	-.03	.12	-.02	-.14	-.01	.09	.31**	.30**	.14	.28**	.19*	.20*	.06	.21*	(.87)						
6a	Utility Reactions T2	4.02	.63	.26**	.07	.02	.01	.14	.03	-.08	-.02	.11	.16	.16	.07	.16	.09	.12	.00	.10	.93**	(.67)					
6b	Affective Reactions T2	4.02	.58	.20*	-.03	-.08	-.08	.06	-.07	-.21*	-.05	.04	.45**	.43**	.19	.37**	.28**	.26**	.12	.31**	.85**	.59**	(.92)				
7	**Candidate Reaction T3**	3.86	.62	.09	.01	-.06	.01	.06	-.03	-.14	.06	-.03	.26**	.39**	-.07	.34**	.14	.13	.04	.22*	.56**	.48**	.54**	(.89)			
7a	Utility Reactions T3	3.71	.62	.03	.01	-.04	.03	.03	-.02	-.09	.07	-.03	.15	.31**	-.13	.23**	.06	.08	-.04	.14	.46**	.43**	.39**	.94**	(.93)		
7b	Affective Reactions T3	4.06	.60	.16	.01	-.08	-.02	.08	-.05	-.18*	.04	-.01	.38**	.42**	.05	.43**	.23*	.17	.16	.28**	.57**	.43**	.64**	.83**	.59**	(.76)	
8	**Suitability**	3.25	1.16	.19*	-.05	-.05	-.06	.00	-.15	-.16	-.15	-.10	.27**	.30**	.06	.30**	.86**	.89**	.37**	.71**	.18	.12	.23*	.14	.11	.15	(.93)

Cronbach's alpha is reported in the diagonal.* Significant at $p < .05$, ** Significant at $p < .01$

Figure 3.1

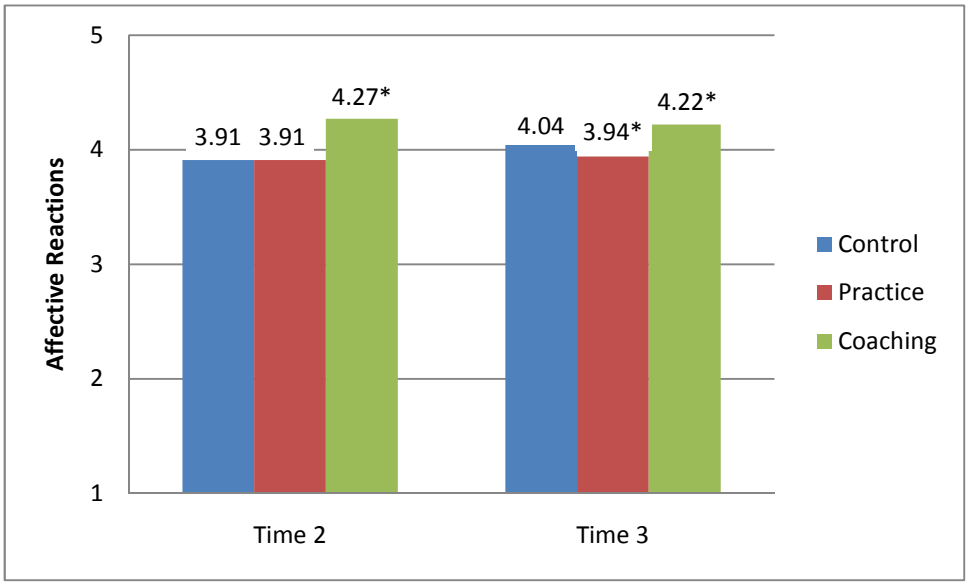
Effect of Treatment Group on Interview Ratings



* Significant mean difference at $p < .05$

Figure 3.2

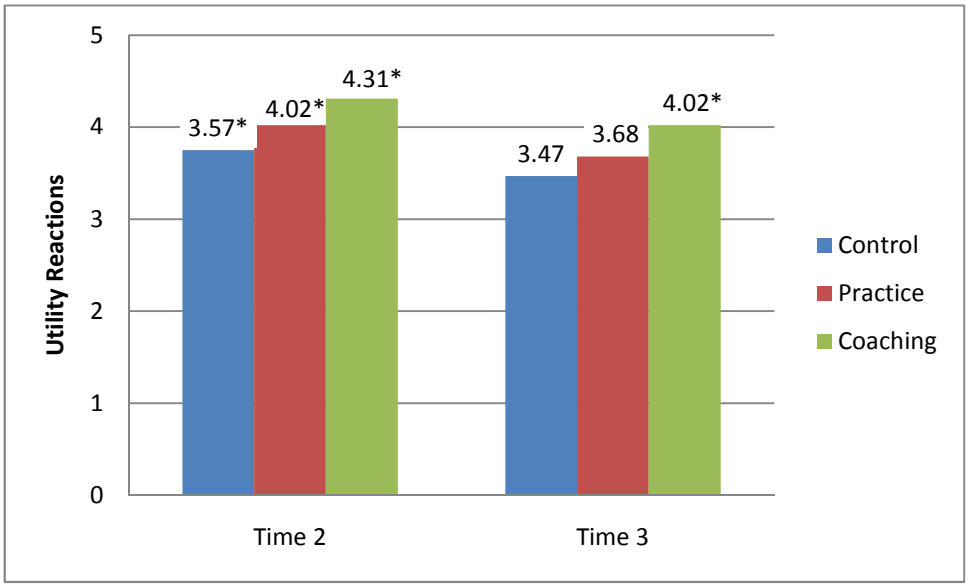
Affective Reactions to Training Condition



* Significant mean difference at $p < .05$

Figure 3.3

Utility Reactions to Training Condition



* Significant mean difference at $p < .05$

Table 3.2

Change in Anxiety between Time 1 and Time 3

	Time 1	**Time 3**
	M	*M*
Full Anxiety Scale	2.42**	2.54**
Communications Anxiety	2.33**	2.51**
Social Anxiety	2.35*	2.47*
Performance Anxiety	2.55	2.65

* Mean difference is significant at $p < .05$.

** Mean difference is significant at $p < .01$.

Table 3.3

Impression Management Behaviors as Rated by Candidate vs. Interviewer

	Candidate-rated *M*	Interviewer-rated *M*
Overall IM	3.68**	3.11**
Verbal Self-promotion	3.96**	3.33**
Verbal Ingratiation	3.05**	2.33**
Nonverbal	4.08*	3.89*

* Mean difference significant at $p < .05$.

** Mean difference significant at $p < .01$.

Table 3.4

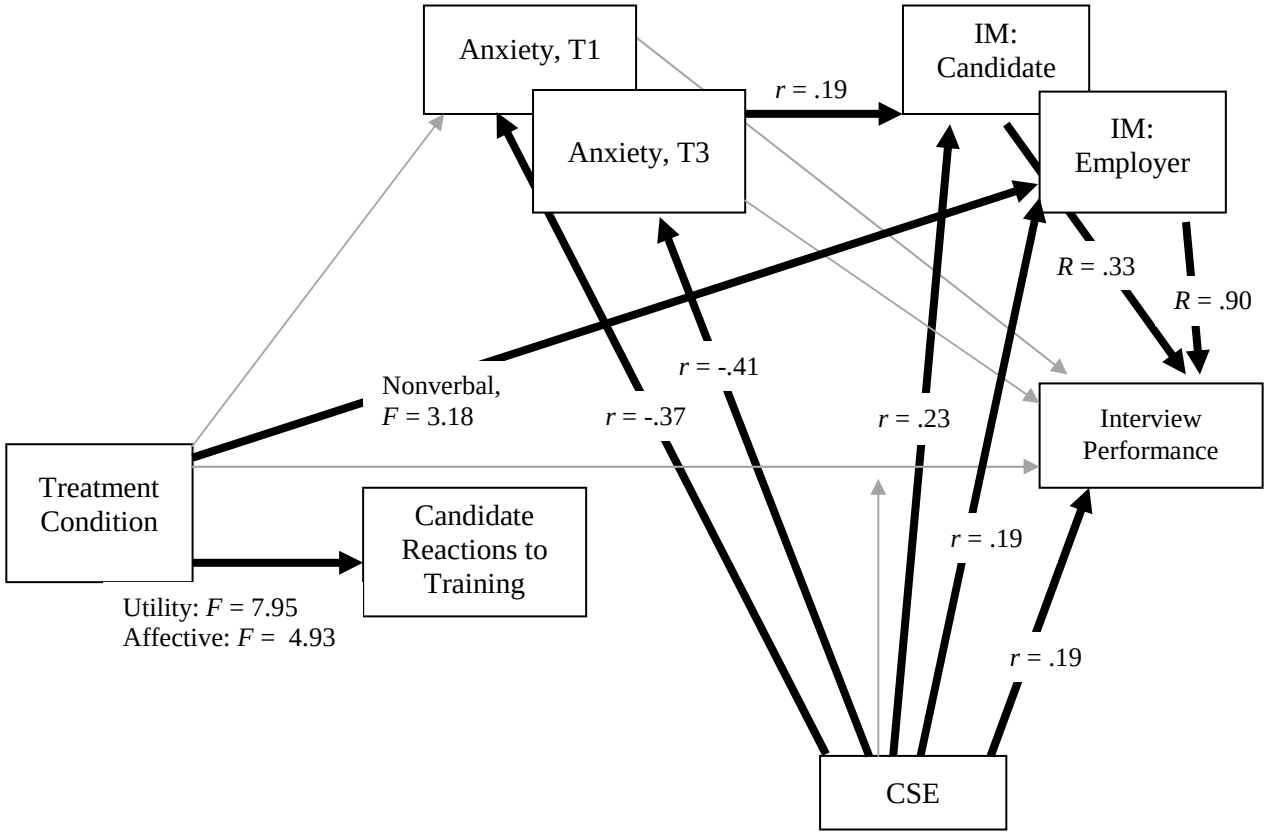
Effects of Impression Management Behaviors on Interview Ratings

	R	*B*	*t*	*p*
IM behaviors rated by interviewer	.90			.00
Verbal Self-promotion		.85**	13.65	.00
Verbal Ingratiation		.04	.61	.55
Nonverbal		.29**	4.04	.00
IM behaviors reported by candidate	.33			.004
Verbal Self-promotion		.39	1.66	.10
Verbal Ingratiation		-.03	-.24	.81
Nonverbal		.35	1.92	.06

* Significant at $p < .05$; **Significant at $p < .01$

Figure 3.4

Model of relationship between interview training, CSE, anxiety, IM and interview performance



Hypotheses

1. A. Effect of training on interview performance (not supported)
   B. Effect of training on candidate reactions (supported)

2. A. Effect of anxiety on performance (not supported)
   B. Effect of subcomponents of anxiety on performance (not supported)
   RQ1: Effect of training on anxiety (not supported)
   RQ2: Effect of training on subcomponents of anxiety (not supported)

3. **A. Effect of CSE on interview performance (supported)**
   B. Moderating effect of CSE on training-performance relationship (not supported)
   C. Effect of CSE on anxiety (supported)

4. **A. Effect of IM on performance (supported)**
   B. IM mediates the anxiety-performance relationship (not supported)

5. **Effect of CSE on IM (supported)**

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