

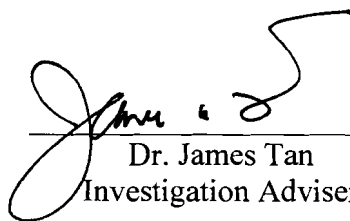
CONVENIENCE STORE EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS OF PROCESSES FOR  
REDUCTION IN HOURLY SALES ASSOCIATE TURNOVER

by

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### ABSTRACT

|  |                    |              |                  |
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The purpose of this study was to examine training procedures and selection methods in effort to provide suggestions to reduce sales associate turnover at Company ABC. A large amount of data was collected for this study including a survey administered to all 63 store managers examining the usage and usefulness of the current selection tools, interviews with current sales associate employees regarding the training they received, and archival data such as exit interviews, termination reasons, and annual turnover data. The store manager survey found that reference checks and past employment checks were used the least and considered the least useful. Comments regarding on the survey in general asked for more training with all tools and suggested confusion and frustration with certain aspects of the tools. The sales associate

interviews revealed specific opportunities for training improvement and identified inconsistencies in the training as well as positive aspects. The exit interviews suggested that the main reasons employees left Company ABC are: (1) not getting along with their managers, (2) poor wages, and (3) scheduling problems. The study concludes with recommendations for the organization to decrease turnover.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Company ABC is a privately held company that owns and operates over 60 convenience stores within the states of MN, WI, SD, and MI. The company has approximately 650 employees. The largest segment of their employee population is composed of hourly sales associates (about 480 employees); this group of employees also experiences the highest turnover rate.

### *Statement of the Problem*

Company ABC has been experiencing high rates of turnover with their hourly sales associate employees and need to determine the source(s) of turnover in order to reduce it.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The objective of the study is to examine the company's selection methods and training procedures in order to make recommendations for improvement of the current processes so that turnover can be reduced. This research project is significant because the cost of employee turnover is extremely high and its reduction could save the company a great deal of money. Other significant benefits of reducing turnover is that the company could end up saving time, be able to improve their current processes, and increase employee morale, retention, and performance.

### *Assumptions of the Study*

This study assumes that turnover is a problem and that reducing it is possible. Sales associate turnover is a common problem in the retail and convenience store industries and could require more research than this study entails.

### *Definition of Terms*

*Background Check.* A tool used to assess the qualification of a job applicant by examining aspects of their past (e.g., criminal record, credit history, driving record).

*Interview.* A selection procedure designed to predict future job performance on the basis of applicants' oral responses to oral inquiries (Dessler, 2003).

*Past Employment Check.* A formal contact made by the potential employer to the former employers of an applicant to verify employment. A tool used to assess the qualifications of a job applicant.

*Reference Check.* A formal contact by the potential employer to the applicants references to assess the qualifications of a job applicant.

*Retention.* The ability to keep employees at the company for at least one year.

*Sales Associate.* Position within the company that assures efficient and courteous customer service, collects payments for purchases, and fulfills other specified general store tasks.

*Training.* A program designed to improve employee job skills, assist in adaptation to other organizational changes, or develop employee awareness and understanding of problems (Griffin & Moorhead, 1986).

*Turnover.* The termination of employment either voluntarily (quit, accepted another job) or involuntarily (fired).

*Turnover Rate.* The ratio of the number of employees replaced to the average number of employees during a given time period.

*Turnover Rate Formula.* Total terminations for the position in year divided by the number of employees in the position as of December 31 for the year, multiplied by 100.

### *Limitations of the Study*

This study is limited by the fact that it is only the first step to reducing turnover for the company. Using information gathered from this evaluation decisions, changes, and judgments can be made towards improving the retention of employees but it will by no means deliver a 'cure all' solution to the problem.

This study is also limited by the quality of the archival data provided. Some of the data may be incomplete, incorrect, or only be partially available for some variables. Also, this study is limited in its ability to be generalized to other companies. Company ABC has unique reasons for turnover which cannot be assumed of other similar organizations.

### *Methodology*

First a survey was developed and administered to store managers to gain insight on the selection tools used to hire employees. Second, interviews were conducted with sales associate employees to examine the training and orientation processes that are occurring. Lastly, many types of archival data were collected including exit interviews, termination reasons, and wages.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

Organizational turnover rates among sales associate employees range from 45% to 200% (Jones & Skarlicki, 2003) and can end up costing on average 1.5 times the annual salary of the position in question (Phillips, 1990). This high cost of turnover is the most frequently cited reason for lagging productivity and failure of industries to compete effectively (Phillips, 1990). The types of industries that experience the highest annual turnover include the accommodation and food service industry, leisure and hospitality, and the retail trade industries (Nobscot Corporation, 2006). The main focus of this paper is on turnover in the retail industry, specifically the convenience store industry (Extended Retail Solutions, 2006).

### *Definition of Turnover*

Although turnover can be defined and examined in a number of different ways, its broad definition is the rate at which salespeople leave the salesforce (Darmon, 1990). Organizations are often concerned with different types of turnover including involuntary, voluntary, functional, and dysfunctional turnover. *Involuntary turnover* refers to the termination of an employee against his or her will. Examples of involuntary turnover include discharge, layoff, and illness or death (McConnell, 1999). Although turnover can have negative effects, this type of turnover is important because it involves removing the poor performing employees from the company. *Voluntary turnover* refers to when an employee leaves their job voluntarily. Examples of voluntary turnover include leaving for other employment, leaving for “personal” reasons, and retirement (McConnell, 1999). This type of turnover can have significant adverse effects on organizations because it usually involves a high performing employee leaving by choice. Not all turnover is negative, as explained by functional turnover. *Functional turnover* refers to when a poorly performing employee leaves the organization either voluntarily or involuntarily. This type

of turnover removes the employees who do not work at a satisfactory level, allowing for more qualified employees to enter the position. On the other hand, *dysfunctional turnover*, when a high performing employee leaves the organization either voluntarily or involuntarily, can result in negative consequences for the company (Darmon, 1990). Organizations avoid voluntary and dysfunctional turnover because of the costs associated with these. These types of turnover are what most research has been focused on and will be discussed in more detail below.

### *Turnover Costs*

The cost of turnover is identified by examining both direct and indirect losses and has been calculated to add up to about 75% of the employee's annual salary. The first type of cost, direct cost, includes advertising fees, agency fees, finders' fees, forms, general purpose work, physical examinations, testing, travel, relocation, over-head costs, training equipment, break-in time, reduced productivity, extra supervision, exit interviews, severance pay, and unemployment compensation (McConnell, 1999). Direct costs are predictable and can be easily estimated, yet depending on the position, may not be the most expensive type of cost.

The second type of cost identified with turnover is indirect cost. Indirect costs include inefficiency of the incoming employee, inefficiency of closely associated co-workers, diminishing efficiency of the departing employee and the closely associated co-workers, inefficiency of the position while vacant, out of pocket processing costs, human resource department, non-human resource processing costs, interviewing, coaching, teaching, and record keeping (McConnell, 1999). These indirect costs are much harder to measure and have the potential to be more expensive than direct costs depending on how quickly another employee is hired, how fast the new employee is trained, and how long it takes for the new employee to become an efficient worker in the organization.

For non-exempt (hourly) employees, the average cost of turnover can be as much as 75% of their salary (McConnell, 1999; Phillips, 1990). To put this into perspective, consider an employee whose salary is \$15,000 per year. With the cost of turnover at 75% of the salary, the actual cost of turnover for this one employee would be \$11,250. Now consider a company of 1,000 employees that has an annual turnover rate of 10%, the annual cost of turnover for this company would be \$1.13 million. The convenience store industry uses a similar equation to calculate annual turnover cost. This equation takes the number of employees lost multiplied by their average salary, and multiplied again by 30% (Stang, 2003). Using this equation, if a store loses five employees per year with an average salary of \$16,000, the annual turnover cost for the store would be \$24,000. Furthermore, consider a company with 55 stores who lose five employees each per year. The annual turnover cost for this company would be about \$1.32 million.

### *Causes of Turnover*

The negative effects turnover impose on organizations have resulted in an abundance of research aimed to determine its causes. Typically there are multiple causes of turnover within an organization and research on the subject has identified three factors consistently related to turnover: (1) organizational, (2) individual, and (3) economic-labor market factors (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979).

Organizational factors are work-related variables of an organization which influences employee turnover. Organizations can control these factors which include facets such as the organizations goals and values, policies, practices, rewards, job content, supervision, work group, conditions, climate, size, pay, commitment to employees, and employee job satisfaction (Cotton and Tuttle, 1986; Mobley et al., 1979). The research conducted on these facets has

shown fairly consistent results. Of these organizational factors, appropriate pay (Trevor, Gerhart, & Boudreau, 1997), high job satisfaction (Hendrie, 2004; Muchinsky & Tuttle, 1979), high commitment to the organization (Sager, 1991), and supportive supervision (Firth, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004; George & Bettenhausen, 1990) have shown consistently strong results in reducing turnover.

Individual factors include: employee's age, education, tenure, personality, family responsibility, gender, marital status, intention to leave, and aptitude (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Mobley et al., 1979). The research on these facets has shown fairly consistent results. In general, researchers have found that the older employees are less likely to leave (Darden, Hampton, & Boatwright, 1987; Muchinsky and Tuttle, 1979). Other studies have found that longer tenure and larger family size (or number of dependents) are both related to lower turnover rates (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Muchinsky & Tuttle, 1979). Cotton and Tuttle (1986), Sager (1991a), and Vandenberg & Nelson (1999) also found that higher educated employees and employees with stronger behavioral intentions are more likely to leave the organization while married employees are less likely.

However, in a study on computer salespeople, individual factors did not differentiate between those who left the firm and those who stayed (Fern, Avilia, & Grewal, 1989). In most cases, the usefulness of individual factors data will be of little use to organizations because of equal employment opportunity laws.

Economic-labor market factors include: unemployment rate, employment perceptions, union presence, and economic conditions (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Mobley et al., 1979). Of these, research has shown that higher perceived employment is related to higher turnover rates while union presence is related to a lower turnover rate (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). Similarly, research

also indicates that when the unemployment rate is higher, turnover is lower (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). Lastly, Muchinsky and Tuttle (1979) reported that employees stayed longer when their employment expectations were met. Economic-labor market factors have both controllable and uncontrollable facets which makes it another area to turn to for an organization is looking to reduce turnover.

### *Turnover Reduction Strategies*

No one strategy will resolve all turnover for each specific organization. Turnover occurs for different reasons in different organizations, which is why determining specific organizational causes of turnover is crucial. Once these causes have been identified, interventions based on research can begin.

There are a variety of ways to reduce turnover. These include: (1) improving recruitment and selection, (2) improving orientation and training, (3) offering competitive compensation and benefits, (4) enhancing organizational commitment, (5) increasing management education, (6) allowing flexible employment circumstances, and (7) continually tracking and analyzing turnover (McConnell, 1999). For this report, the researcher is concerned with reducing turnover through selection and training. As stated above, these interventions will apply on an organization specific basis rather than an all-encompassing approach.

*Selection.* Selection refers to assessing which potential employees are likely to perform the best and make the best contributions to the organization (Pulakos, 2005). Decisions on whether or not to hire an applicant are made based on the applicant's scores on one or multiple assessment methods and tools. There are many different assessment methods and tools available to employers who need to predict future job performance, job-related learning, and other job specific criteria (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). In selecting which assessment method or tool to use

employers should evaluate the validity of the tool, its potential adverse impact, and the cost or utility of using the tool (Pulakos, 2005).

Validity refers to whether or not the assessment tool provides useful information about how well an employee will perform once they are hired (Pulakos, 2005). It is especially important to examine the criterion related validity of the tool which measures the relation between how well employees performed on the assessment to how well they perform on the job (Pulakos, 2005). Criterion related validity coefficients range from 0 to 1.0 with coefficients closer to 1.0 indicating a stronger relation. It is important to keep in mind though that criterion related validity levels hardly reach 1.0 because of various errors (i.e., sampling, measurement, etc.) (Morris & Lobsenz, 2003). Increasing the validity of hiring methods can lead to greater savings for the organization, and conversely using methods with low validity can result in lesser savings (Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

Employers also need to beware of the adverse impact selection methods may have. Adverse impact occurs when a disproportionately small number of applicants in a protected group are selected for the job compared to the majority (Pulakos, 2005). Adverse impact is said to exist if the proportion of protected group members selected is less than 80% of the proportion of majority group members selected (Morris & Lobsenz, 2003; Pulakos, 2005). For example, if the proportion of females passing the test is 55% and the proportion of males passing a test is 95%, the proportion of females passing the test compared to males passing the test is 58%, which meets the definition of adverse impact defined by the *Uniform Guidelines*.

Lastly, employers need to consider the cost of the selection method. Selection methods may involve high costs for development, may require high costs to administer, and some may require applicants to spend a full day or more to complete the assessment (Pulakos, 2005). After

examining an assessment's validity and potential for adverse impact the organization will have a better idea of how much money will be needed for their method of choice. The following section of this report will examine the aspects of three specific tools; integrity tests, interviews, and reference checks.

Integrity tests are usually in a multiple choice format and administered via paper-and-pencil or on a computer (Camara & Schneider, 1994; Pulakos, 2005). These tests measure attitudes and experiences related to the honesty, trustworthiness, and dependability of an individual (Pulakos, 2005; Camara & Schneider, 1994). Furthermore they can be used to predict the probability of drinking or using drugs on the job, fighting on the job, stealing from the employer, and other undesirable behaviors (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Validity levels for integrity tests are in the moderate to high range with criterion-related validities ranging between .20 and .50 (Pulakos, 2005). According to Schmidt and Hunter (1998), the corrected validity level for integrity tests was .41.

Research has also found that assessment tools can work well in combination (Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). For example, the combination of an integrity test and a general mental ability test is a good predictor of job performance with a composite validity level of .65 (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Integrity tests also have low adverse impact and are not very expensive to develop or administer (Pulakos, 2005).

However, critics of integrity tests have argued that these tests are susceptible to faking and socially desirable responding, and therefore result in incorrect employee selection. Research conducted on this topic does not support these critics (Brown & Cothorn, 2002; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1998; Schmitt & Oswald, 2006). It has been shown that the predictive validity of integrity test remains even when applicants respond in socially desirable or false ways (Ones &

Viswesvaran, 1998). In general, an appropriate integrity test, especially if combined with a general mental ability measure, can be a useful assessment method.

Interviewing is the most common selection method used in organizations and can be conducted in two different ways, through unstructured and structured interviews (Judge, Higgins, & Cable, 2000; Pulakos, 2005). The purpose of the interview is to measure a variety of skills and abilities, particularly softer skills such as leadership style, interpersonal and communication skills, planning, and adaptability (Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Pulakos, 2005).

In unstructured interviews, the questions asked often vary from candidate to candidate as well as between interviewers (Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). These questions are decided by the interviewer and have no agreed upon standards for assessing the applicant's performance or response during the interview (Pulakos, 2005; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

Structured interviews use a standard set of questions designed to assess the applicant and have a standard rating criteria to help interviewers judge the responses (Pulakos, 2005; Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

Research has found that structured interviews have a much higher validity with scores ranging from .35 to .62 while unstructured interview validity scores only range from .14 to .33 (Campion, Palmer, & Campion, 1997; Judge, Higgins, & Cable, 2000; McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, 1994; Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Even better, the combination of a structured interview and a test of general mental ability generated a composite validity score of .63, the second highest score in a study done by Schmidt and Hunter (1998). Adverse impact is also low for interviews and even lower for structured interviews compared to unstructured (Pulakos, 2005; Ryan & Tippins, 2004). One drawback to interviewing is the high cost of its development and administration (Pulakos, 2005; Ryan & Tippins, 2004). Interviewing

is already being used today by most organizations and by adding structure its validity should increase and allow the employers to hire the best candidates (Judge et al., 2000).

The last selection tool to be discussed is the reference check. Reference checks provide information to an employer about the candidates past performance, accuracy of statements on the resume or interviews, and allow individuals who have had experience with the candidate to provide an evaluation (Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). These checks are usually done by telephone or face to face but over the past years employers have been unwilling to provide much information (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). The validity of reference checks are fairly low at .26 but are inexpensive to conduct (Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). In general, little research has been done on reference checks because of current legal climate in the United States (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

*Training and Orientation.* To ensure the high performance of a new employee, organizations must train and orient them. Training refers to a deliberately planned set of learning experiences designed to modify employee characteristics and acquire skills to aid in the achievement of goals (Berry & Houston, 1993; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). Orientation refers to the formal procedure for providing new employees basic background information about the organization and introduces them to their job, co-workers, and the organization (Bohlander, Snell, & Sherman, 2001; Dessler, 2003; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). Different methods to accomplish both training and orientation can be used and will be discussed below.

As mentioned above, orientation is more or less the introduction of the new employee to their job, their environment, and their co-workers. The importance of employee orientation should not be overlooked because its possible benefits include lower turnover, increased productivity, improved employee morale, lower recruiting and training costs, facilitation of

learning, stronger loyalty, lower absenteeism, higher job satisfaction, and reduction of the new employee's anxiety (Bohlander et al., 2001; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). Even more important is that without information such as rules and policies employees are more apt to make time-consuming or even dangerous errors (Dressler, 2003).

Employee orientation is done differently depending on the organization (Dessler, 2003). A good orientation program would begin with an explanation of the conditions of employment, pay, benefits, and other areas not directly under a supervisor's direction by a human resources specialist (Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). The human resource specialist would then introduce the new employee to their supervisor who would continue the orientation by familiarizing them with the workplace, introducing them to their new co-workers, and explaining to them the exact nature of the job (Dessler, 2003). The minimum amount of orientation a new employee should receive is an employee handbook which explains things like work hours, reviews, and vacations (Dessler, 2003). Many organizations create orientation packets for their new employees. Bohlander et al. (2001) suggest having the following information in such a packet:

- Company history copy of specific job goals and descriptions

- List of unique terms in the industry

- Copy of each important organizational publication

- Telephone numbers and locations of key personnel

- List of on-the-job training opportunities

- Safety and emergency procedures

- Copy of policy handbook

- Current organization chart

Map of facility

Copy of union contracts

List of holidays

List of employee benefits

Sources of information

Copies of insurance plans

In sum, a successful orientation should make the employee feel welcome and at ease, be clearly informed about what is expected in terms of work and behavior, aid in developing a broad understanding of the organization, and have begun the process of becoming socialized in the organizations ways of acting and doing things (Dessler, 2003).

After orientation has been completed, the next step for the new employee is training. The goal of training is to bring the new employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities to the required level for satisfactory job performance (Bohlander et al., 2001). The result of training is not only a more effective employee, but companies that invest more in training are generally found to be more successful and profitable (Bassi & McMurrer, 1998). Training, like orientation, has different methods of reaching its goal. Deciding on the best approach to training is the first step that should be taken (Berry & Houston, 1993).

Before any training program is developed a training needs assessment should be conducted (Brown, 2002; Fowler, 1995; Latham, 1988). Often, training programs are put together without studying the need in which the program is supposed to address (Berry & Houston, 1993). A training needs assessment should be done before a training program is developed to identify specific problem areas in the organization, obtain management support, develop data for evaluation, and to determine the costs and benefits of training (Brown, 2002).

Three types of analyses should be conducted for the needs assessment which will be briefly discussed.

The first type of analysis is called an organization analysis (Berry & Houston, 1993; Brown, 2002; Fowler, 1995; Latham, 1988). An organizational analysis is an examination of the environment, strategies, and resources of an organization (Bohlander et al., 2001). This information collected includes variables such as absenteeism, turnover, and accidents where high levels of any of these may indicate training needs (Berry & Houston, 1993). The second type of analysis conducted during the training needs assessment is the task analysis. A task analysis involves reviewing job descriptions for information such as the types of tasks performed and the skills needed to perform the job, and compare them to the actual tasks and skill of current employees (Annett & Stanton, 2006; Berry & Houston, 1993; Bohlander et al., 2001; Brown, 2002). The gaps between performance and job requirements indicate training needs (Brown, 2002). The last analysis needed for the training needs assessment is an individual analysis. This analysis uncovers the employees that need training and those who do not, usually by collecting information from performance reviews and examining inadequacies (Berry & Houston, 1993; Brown, 2002; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). The deficiencies and inadequacies found from the analysis indicate where training is needed (Brown, 2002). Once these analyses are conducted and areas of training need have been revealed, determining the method of training can be completed.

After objectives have been determined, it is time for the actual training to begin. There are many training methods to choose from including apprenticeship training, internships, classroom instruction, and computer-based training, but the main training method this paper will focus on is on-the-job training (OJT).

The first training method to be briefly discussed is apprenticeship training. In this type of training the new employee is given thorough instruction and experience under the guide of a skilled worker (Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). An apprenticeship can last two to five years and during this time the apprentice usually receives lower wages than the skilled worker (Mathis & Jackson, 1991). The next training method, internship program, is a form of OJT that usually combines classroom instruction from high schools, colleges, universities, or trade schools with job training (Bohlander et al., 2001; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). Besides the large number of fields internships are available in, the students are often allowed to earn college credits on the basis of successful completion (Bohlander et al., 2001; Mathis & Jackson, 1991).

Another training method is classroom/lecture training. In this method, information is presented using lectures, demonstrations, films, or videotapes and is a quick and simple way to present information to a large group of trainees (Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). The next method that will briefly be discussed is computer based training. In computer based training the trainee interacts with computer based or CD-ROM systems to increase their knowledge and skills (Dessler, 2003). The major advantages of this type of training are its availability, the reduction in learning time, interactivity, contains facilitated record keeping, and that it's self-paced by trainee (Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003; Ganger, 1990).

The last training method to discuss is on-the-job training. This type of training is the most common type for non-managerial employees (Berry & Houston, 1993; Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003). This training is usually done by the manager or by other employees who teach the person to learn a job while working at it (Dessler, 2003; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). There are many advantages to OJT, including: high level of transfer, relatively inexpensive, trainees learn

while producing, potential to build good relationships with new employee, quick feedback, and hands-on experience under working conditions (Berry & Houston, 1993; Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003).

Although OJT is used by many organizations it is often one of the most poorly implemented training methods (Berry & Houston, 1993; Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). The disadvantages of OJT include: lack of a well-structured training environment, poor training skills of managers, absence of well-defined job performance criteria, and disruption of work, all of which translate into poor trainee performance (Berry & Houston, 1993; Bohlander et al., 2001; Dessler, 2003; Mathis & Jackson, 1991). To overcome these problems realistic goals and measures must be developed, specific training schedules for each trainee should be planned, help for managers to establish an atmosphere conducive to learning should be provided, and periodic evaluations after training is completed should be conducted (Bohlander et al., 2001). OJT can be a valuable training method as long as issues are addressed to allow maximum learning opportunities for the new employee.

### *Convenience Store Industry*

The National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) defines a convenience store as, “a retail business with primary emphasis placed on providing the public a convenient location to quickly purchase from a wide array of consumable products [predominantly food or food and gasoline] and services” (NACS, 2005a, p. 3). The traditional convenience store offers items including dairy, bakery, snack foods, beverages, tobacco, grocery health and beauty aids, confectionery, and sometimes fresh or frozen meats, gasoline, and limited produce (NACS, 2006a). Most stores have about 12 parking spaces and are open 24 hours per day (NACS, 2006a). In 2004 convenience stores employed an average of 11 employees, with about 38%

being part-time and nearly 62% as full-time employees (NACS, 2005a). It is often assumed that convenience stores make most of their profit through gasoline sales, but this is far from the truth. According to the 2005 State of the Industry Report (2005a), nearly 60% of the total store profit is made through in-store sales while only about 28% of the store's profit is made through gasoline sales. Since store profit is predominantly made through in-store sales, good employees with excellent customer service skills are a must in the industry.

The importance of hiring and retaining good employees to work in convenience stores is extremely important. The mission statements of many organizations within the industry emphasize providing the highest levels of service to their customers. Yet, the convenience store industry has had an average turnover rate per year over 100% since 1997 (NACS, 2005b). Reducing turnover rates will provide a significant advantage to any organization. With controlled turnover, talented and experienced workers can be maintained, training costs can be held to a minimum while being completed in a more timely fashion, and the cost of doing business can be reduced significantly (McConnell, 1999). The rest of the report will examine the research conducted in effort to provide suggestions for reducing turnover at Company ABC.

### CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The objective of the study is to examine Company ABC's selection methods and training procedures in order to make recommendations for improvement of the current processes to reduce their turnover problem. The author used a variety of data collection methods (quantitative, qualitative, and archival) for this project. First the author developed and administered a survey to store managers to gain insight on the usage and usefulness of selection tools used to hire employees. Second, interviews were conducted with sales associate employees to examine the training and orientation processes that are occurring. Lastly, many types of archival data were collected including exit interviews, termination reasons, and wages for insight into other turnover related concerns. This section will address the subjects selected, the instruments used, the data collection procedures followed, the data analysis conducted, and the limitations of each method.

#### *Store Manager Survey*

*Subject selection and description.* All 63 store managers of Company ABC were included in the survey. To ensure complete confidentiality and anonymity, demographic data was not collected from the store managers.

*Instrumentation.* An online survey was developed to collect data from the store managers (See Appendix A). Content of the survey was developed through the collaboration of the researcher with two district managers, two store managers, two human resources employees, and the chief financial officer of Company ABC. The final instrument contained 23 potential questions in the form of drop-down menus (11 items), open-ended responses (9 items), ranking responses (1 item), option button responses (1 item), and a checklist (1 item).

The survey questions probed into the usage, usefulness, reason for not using, and any comments regarding the following selection tools: background checks, reference checks, follow-up interviews, and past employment checks. Also, questions regarding usage of the profiling survey, how often they have interviewed employees they didn't hire, how often they call human resources when rehiring a past employee, to put in order the steps they take in the selection process, to identify any other screening tools they use, to identify which training/orientation procedures they use, and to identify their district manager were included on the survey. The survey was also set up in a way that allowed respondents to skip the question of why they don't use a survey tool if they responded in the previous question that they use the tool.

*Data collection procedures.* A letter describing the project, the research to be conducted, and request for cooperation was sent to all of Company ABC's store and district managers from the company president two weeks before the survey was deployed (See Appendix B). When the survey was deployed via email, a cover letter was attached describing the research, requesting participation, and assuring confidentiality (See Appendix C). Respondents were given two weeks to complete the survey and were sent a reminder via email after one week to do so. The internet in some of the stores was poor and would not open the survey. These store managers were instructed to contact their district manager for a paper copy of the survey and to mail it back to the researcher when completed.

*Data analysis.* Qualitative and quantitative data analyses were conducted. The open-ended survey questions were analyzed using the SPSS Text Analysis 1.5 program to identify themes within responses. For the remainder of the survey, questions were analyzed using SPSS 14.0. Frequency statistics were run for all non open-ended questions and a Pearson correlation was done to correlate how often store managers interview an employee they didn't hire and how

often store managers conduct background checks, reference checks, past employment checks, and follow-up interviews.

*Limitations.* Although steps were taken to ensure confidentiality, some store managers may not have responded honestly. Also, store managers are very busy people and if they completed the survey during work hours they may not have taken the time to respond accurately and could get distracted while doing so. Some store managers do not have very good internet access at their store and may not have gone through the trouble of contacting their district manager for a paper copy of the survey.

#### *Sales Associate Interviews*

*Subject selection and description.* Sales associates who at the time of the interview, had worked for Company ABC more than two weeks but less than one month met the inclusion criteria. The author used these criteria because sales associates are expected to be fully trained after two weeks of work. The goal was to interview these employees when the training was still fresh in their mind, which is why the one month limit was set. Interviews were conducted during two different weeks in which a total of 60 sales associate employees fell into the appropriate time parameters.

*Instrumentation.* All sales associate employees were asked the same questions in the same order during the structured interview. The structured interview consisted of four main questions and a short checklist that was read to them all pertaining to the training they received as an employee of Company ABC (See Appendix D). Questions asked the employees to describe the training that was conducted, what the best or most helpful part of the training was, what they would change about the training, and if they had enough training.

*Data collection procedures.* The researcher contacted Company ABC's human resource office and requested a list of sales associate employees who were hired within the last month and what their work schedule was for the upcoming week. This was done twice, in consecutive months. The employees were then contacted by the researcher who explained the project and confidentiality issues, and asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. If the employee was willing to do the interview, the store manager was then contacted by the researcher to approve the date and time that was set. Since the store managers had been previously informed about the project almost all allowed their employee to be interviewed. The only time a store manager would not allow the interview was if the employee were working alone at the store during the scheduled time.

The structured interviews were mostly administered over the phone but some were done face to face. All interviews were recorded and always done during the interviewees' work shift. The researcher always requested the interviewee to move to a quiet place with no one around so that they could feel at ease to speak freely. Before the interview started, the project itself and confidentiality was explained again.

*Data analysis.* After the interviews were complete, the recordings were transcribed and analyzed for common themes. Frequency statistics were also run for the small checklist using SPSS 14.0.

*Limitations.* Although steps were taken to ensure confidentiality, some sales associates may not have responded honestly. For some, confidentiality may not have been the issue, employees may not have responded honestly because they wanted to make their store manager sound perfect or because their store manager told them what to say.

Another significant limitation was the availability and time conflicts of the researcher and the employees. Since all interviews were conducted during the employees work shift it was not possible to create a schedule that would allow every employee to be interviewed.

*Archival Data: Exit Interviews*

*Subject selection and description.* The subjects for the exit interview data are those who voluntarily terminated their employment. Company ABC had 116 of these interviews in their possession.

*Instrumentation.* The data collection instrument is in the form of a survey which inquires about work load, satisfaction and dissatisfaction of work, any issues they would like to bring to the company's attention, whether or not they would recommend Company ABC to a friend for possible employment, any recommendations to make Company ABC's workplace better, if anything could be done to prevent their termination, and reasons for leaving the company (See Appendix E).

*Data collection procedures.* Workers who voluntarily terminated their employment with Company ABC were mailed an exit interview in which they are requested to mail back to the company. The exit interviews were collected by Company ABC's human resource department and photocopies were made and provided to the researcher.

*Data analysis.* Exit interview data was copied from its paper form and put into an Excel spreadsheet. SPSS Text Analysis 1.5 was used to analyze the data for themes. Frequency statistics were also run using SPSS 14.0 on three questions regarding amount of work, recommending a friend, and preventing termination.

*Limitations.* The exit interview survey is only given to employees who voluntarily quit, and does not provide any information about the employees who were fired. The employees who

completed and returned the exit interviews may have done so because they were very happy with their employment or were upset about something. A polarized (negative or positive) response is likely to be given from those who returned the form than those who did not.

*Archival Data: Employee Wages*

*Subject selection and description.* The subjects included in this data set are all the current sales associate employees on payroll. The total number of sales associates currently on payroll when the spreadsheet was sent to the researcher is 529.

*Instrumentation.* No instrument was used to collect this data; the information on the spreadsheet is kept in Company ABC's database. Information on the spreadsheet includes the store number which the employee works at, their hire date, their hourly rate at hire, the date their current rate became effective, their current hourly rate, their increase in raise (if any), the number of days worked until they got the raise, and their tenure in days up to June 1, 2006.

*Data collection procedures.* The researcher requested the above mentioned spreadsheet of data from Company ABC's human resources department. The data was easy to collect because the company already has it in their employee database. The spreadsheet was sent to the researcher via email.

*Data analysis.* Data analyses were done using SPSS 14.0. Descriptive statistics were calculated to examine wages for the company and between geographic districts.

*Limitations.* The data set only recognizes sales associate employees who have been hired prior to May 3, 2006.

### *Archival Data: Termination Reasons*

*Subject selection and description.* The subjects included in this data set are all sales associate employees since 2000 that have been terminated. The data set contains a total of 3,454 former employees.

*Instrumentation.* No instrument was used to collect this data; the information on the spreadsheet is kept in Company ABC's database. The information on the spreadsheet contains hire dates, termination dates, ages, gender, tenure in days, and termination reasons for all sales associate employees since 2000.

*Data collection procedures.* The researcher requested the above mentioned spreadsheet of data from Company ABC's human resources department. The data was easy to collect because the company already has it in their employee database. The spreadsheet was sent to the researcher via email.

*Data analysis.* Data analysis was completed using SPSS 14.0. Descriptive statistics were run to examine the number of days worked for each termination reason. Termination reasons were sorted into six appropriate groups based on similar reasons for the termination through collaboration of Company ABC's human resources department and the researcher. Descriptive statistics were then run for these groups. T-test analyses were completed comparing employee gender with tenure (in days) as well as comparing employee gender with age. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was run examining age against the termination groups, tenure against the termination groups, and gender against type of turnover (voluntary or involuntary). An analysis was also completed to measure the percent of employees who were terminated within one week of a holiday.

*Limitations.* The data set only recognizes employees who have been terminated up to the date of December 30, 2005. Also, the termination reason for a large number of employees (379) was recorded as “unknown”. Knowing the actual termination reasons for these employees could have a significant effect on the data.

*Archival Data: Turnover*

*Subject selection and description.* The subjects included in this data set are all current sales associate employees, as well as all sales associate employees who have been terminated between 2000 and 2006. This data set contains a total of 3,665 employees.

*Instrumentation.* No instrument was used to collect this data; the information on the spreadsheet is kept in Company ABC’s database. The information on the spreadsheet contains the store number worked at, hire date, and termination date (if applicable) for all employees.

*Data collection procedures.* The researcher requested the above mentioned spreadsheet of data from Company ABC’s human resources department. The data was easy to collect because the company already has it in their employee database. The spreadsheet was sent to the researcher via email.

*Data analysis.* Data analysis was completed using SPSS 14.0. Analyses were done to calculate turnover by year for the entire company, for the four geographic districts that the stores fall into by year, and for each individual store by year.

*Limitations.* The data set only recognizes employees who have been terminated up to the date of April 23, 2006.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The objective of this study is to examine the company's selection methods and training procedures to improve the current processes at Company ABC in effort to solve their turnover problem. The first step to completing the objective was to administer an online survey to the store managers, followed by conducting interviews with sales associate employees, and finally by analyzing archival data. The rest of this chapter will reveal the results of the data collected.

### *Store Manager Survey Analyses*

The response rate for the store manager survey was 95% with 60 out of 63 store managers responding. Most questions on the survey ask how often specific selection tools are used or how useful they are. The questions that ask how often something is done have the following response options: More than 75% of the time, 51-75% of the time, 25-50% of the time, Less than 25% of the time, and Never. Questions that ask how useful something is have the response options of: Very useful, Useful, Useless, and Very useless.

The first selection tool asked about in the survey is the background check. When asked how often background checks are used in the selection process 75% of store managers responded that they use this tool more than 75% of the time. Company ABC's stores in South Dakota and Michigan do not conduct background checks at all which represents 13% of the responses (See Table 1). Store managers who responded that they use background checks less than 75% of the time were asked why. The general response was that they felt Other Screening Tools had Already Ruled out the Applicant (See Table 2). Next store managers were asked how useful they felt background checks are and almost 92% felt they were either very useful or useful (See Table 3). The final question concerning background checks asked if they had any other comments, questions, or concerns with the checks. The general themes that arose out of this

Table 3

*Store Manager Survey: How useful to you are background checks?*

| Response     | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| Very Useless | 2         | 3.3%    |
| Useless      | 3         | 5.0%    |
| Useful       | 31        | 51.7%   |
| Very Useful  | 24        | 40.0%   |

N=60

question was that store managers would like to have a Quicker Response Time on the checks, they feel that there are some Problems with the Checks, they Like the Checks, that they would like More Information when the response comes back, and that they are not allowed on Minors (See Table 4).

Store managers were next asked how often they conducted reference checks on their applicants. Over 60% of store managers reported that they conduct reference checks 50% of the time or less and 10% of store managers have never conducted a reference check (See Table 5). Store managers who conducted reference checks less than 75% of the time responded that they do so because they only get Limited or Useless Information from them, that they Don't Trust the References, they don't have enough Time, and because of the Legal Issues and Liabilities involved (See Table 6). When asked how useful reference checks are 65% of store managers felt they are very useful or useful (See Table 7). The themes from other comments store managers shared about reference checks centered on the fact that they produce Limited Information and that References are Not Trusted (See Table 8).

Table 5

*Store Manager Survey: How often do you do a Reference Check?*

| Response                      | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never done a reference check. | 6         | 10.0%   |
| Less than 25% of the time.    | 21        | 35.0%   |
| 25-50% of the time.           | 10        | 16.7%   |
| 51-75% of the time.           | 9         | 15.0%   |
| More than 75% of the time.    | 14        | 23.3%   |

N=60

The next selection tool covered in the survey was follow-up interviews. Follow-up interviews are used often by store managers, 80% responded that they use them 50% of the time or more (See Table 9). Those who don't conduct follow-up interviews often verify their lack of use by claiming that they have Made their Decision about the Applicant Already or that they Already Know the Applicant and Trust the Referral given (See Table 10). In response to how useful follow-up interviews are 95% of store managers replied that they are either very useful or useful (See Table 11). The comments store managers made about follow-up interviews is that they would like More Training on what questions to ask and that they are concerned with applicants who are Good 'Actors' (See Table 12).

Another selection tool used by Company ABC when hiring is the Orion integrity survey. Only one question was asked about the Orion integrity survey because it is supposed to be administered to all sales associate employees hired at Company ABC. The only question about this tool asked how often the store managers use it during their hiring process. Over 90% of store

managers administer the survey more than 50% of the time when hiring sales associate employees (See Table 13).

The last selection tool store managers were asked about was past employment checks. Over 50% of store managers reported using this tool less than 25% of the time (See Table 14). The main reasons store managers do not use past employment checks more often is because

Table 14

*Store Manager Survey: How often do you do a past employment check?*

| Response                            | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never done a past employment check. | 9         | 15.0%   |
| Less than 25% of the time.          | 22        | 36.7%   |
| 25-50% of the time.                 | 11        | 18.3%   |
| 51-75% of the time.                 | 8         | 13.3%   |
| More than 75% of the time.          | 10        | 16.7%   |

N=60

they get Useless or Limited Information, they Trust Employee Recommendations and Referrals, they Don't Feel the Need to do it, and because of their Lack of Time (See Table 15). Past employment checks were rated as very useful or useful by 55% of store managers (See Table 16). The other comments store managers had about past employment checks is that the Information Received from the checks is Misleading or Useless and that they would like More Information about them (See Table 17).

The last question regarding selection tool usage asked store managers if there were any other tools that they used to aid them in selecting the best possible employee. The other methods

mentions included; the opinions of current employees, body language and appearance, word of mouth, and specific interview questions (See Table 18).

Survey questions also inquired into the general hiring practices of store managers. The first general hiring practice question asked how often store managers have interviewed an applicant who they didn't end up hiring. Exactly 70% of store managers responded that 50% of the time or less they interview an employee they don't hire (See Table 19). This finding prompted the researcher to conduct a correlation to see if there was a relationship between the usage of selection tools and how often employees are interviewed but not hired (See Table 20).

Table 19

*Store Manager Survey: How often have you interviewed an employee who you didn't hire?*

| Response                                     | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Every employee I've interviewed, I've hired. | 1         | 1.7%    |
| Less than 25% of the time.                   | 14        | 23.3%   |
| 25-50% of the time.                          | 27        | 45.0%   |
| 51-75% of the time.                          | 15        | 25.0%   |
| More than 75% of the time.                   | 3         | 5.0%    |

This analysis revealed a significant correlation between reference check usage and background check usage (.54,  $p < .01$ ), reference check usage with interviewing and hiring (.43,  $p < .01$ ), background check usage with interviewing and hiring (-.28,  $p < .05$ ), and past employment check usage with interviewing and hiring (.28,  $p < .05$ ). These results suggest that store managers who use reference checks are also likely to conduct background checks, store managers who use reference checks are likely to interview but not hire applicants as much, store managers who use

Table 20

*Correlation between Selection Tool Usage and How Often Employees are Interviewed but Not Hired.*

| Item Usage                               | 1  | 2   | 3    | 4     | 5     |
|--|----|-----|------|-------|-------|
| 1. Background check                      | -- | .01 | -.20 | -.16  | -.28* |
| 2. Reference check                       |    | --  | .09  | .54** | .43** |
| 3. Follow-up interview                   |    |     | --   | .21   | .15   |
| 4. Past employment check                 |    |     |      | --    | .28*  |
| 5. Interviewed applicant but didn't hire |    |     |      |       | --    |

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

background checks are likely to hire most of the applicants they interview, and store managers who use past employment checks are likely to interview but not hire applicants as much.

Store managers were next asked how often they call human resources to check the eligibility of a former employee they are considering hiring again. Over 70% of store managers responded that they call human resources more than 75% of the time to check the eligibility of hire for a former employee (See Table 21).

The next question on the survey required store managers to put in order the steps they take when hiring a new employee. The first four steps in the selection process was fairly similar among store employees with 'give application' as the first step followed by an 'interview', then administration of the 'Orion systems survey', and then a 'background check' is completed (See Table 22). The final step in the selection process of 'offer applicant job' was also consistent.

One survey question was directed at the training and orientation provided to the new sales associate employees. The question was in a checklist format and asked the store managers to check the items that they would consistently use during their training and orientation. The results

showed that 85% or higher of the store managers consistently completed eight of the ten items during the training and orientation (See Table 23). Reviewing policies from the employee handbook is consistently completed by 76% of store managers while administering the Quiz and Quest was consistently completed by 15% of the store managers. The low percentage of store managers consistently completing the Quiz and Quest is no surprise since shortly after the survey was deployed the Quiz and Quest was discontinued.

The last question on the survey asked store managers to identify their district manager. The purpose of this question was to help ensure a good response rate and make sure all five districts were completing the survey. The responses were fairly accurate with nearly 20% of the responses going to each of the five district managers (See Table 24).

#### *Sales Associate Interview Analyses*

Sales associate interviews were conducted during two different weeks that were a month apart which allowed for 60 possible interviews to be held. Although there were 60 possible sales associate employees who met the criteria of working at Company ABC for at least two weeks but no longer than one month, ten had been terminated already and three had taken the week off resulting in a more accurate total of 47 possible interviews. Of these 47 possible interviews 27 actually occurred making for an adjusted response rate of 57%.

The sales associate interviews were analyzed by identifying responses that were consistent throughout the interviews. There were four major themes identified within the interview responses, each with a number of sub-themes. For this analysis a sub-theme was required to be mentioned by at least five different sales associates. This number was chosen because it is about 20% of the sample population and if generalized to the entire population, the sub-theme could be experienced by about 100 sales associate employees. Support, Opportunities

for Improvement, What is Actually Occurring, and Inconsistencies are the four major themes identified and will be explained below.

The first major theme identified is Support (See Table 25). This theme is defined by the positive aspects mentioned by the new sales associates during the interviews. There are four significant sub-themes identified: Training Support, Positive Training Aspects, Co-worker Attitudes, and Pace of Training. Training Support refers to the duty specific support new sales associates felt when attempting the tasks of the job. Most of the comments in this sub-theme focus on the support of someone standing with them while they completed a duty, having a co-worker 'coach' them through things they have trouble with, and having readily accessible help. A total of 23 interviewee comments fell into this sub-category. The sub-theme of Positive Training Aspects includes comments about specific episodes within the training that were found to be extremely helpful. Some of the comments include having cheat sheets for duties, having a training session with the store manager to go over things other trainers may have skipped over, and being explained the standard and what is expected of them. Comments from 17 interviewees are included in this category.

Co-worker Attitudes, which contain comments from 12 interviewees, is a sub-theme regarding how supportive, helpful, friendly, and nice their new co-workers are. The last sub-theme under support is Pace of Training in which six interviewees commented about. Pace of Training refers to the speed at which the new employees were expected to learn their new duties and become affiliated with how the store runs. The comments in this sub-theme were all positive and reported appropriate paces of training.

The next major theme is identified as Opportunities for Improvement (See Table 26). This theme contains mostly negative comments about the training but also includes some

constructive criticisms. There are four sub-categories within this theme: Training Specifics and Suggestions, Longer or More Training, Trainer Issues, and More Convenient Training Times.

The comments found under Training Specifics and Suggestions refer to duties and responsibilities in which they would have liked to be trained further on or need more help with. For instance, some comments request more training on what is taxable, paperwork, and closing shifts. All interviewees made a comment that is contained in this sub-theme. The next sub-theme, containing comments from nine interviewees, is Longer or More Training. The comments in this sub-theme all make the suggestion of having more training hours or extending the number of shifts training occurs. The third sub-theme under opportunities for improvement is called Trainer Issues.

Trainer Issues were commented on by seven interviewees and these comments refer to the poor training experiences they had. For instance, some interviewees report on trainers who don't care about their job, trainers wandering around rather than training the new employee, and receiving inconsistent training due to multiple trainers. Last is the sub-theme called More Convenient Training Times. This sub-theme was commented on by five interviewees requesting that training take place during slower store hours. The focus of the comments are about how hard it is to be trained when the store is so busy and how uncomfortable they feel trying to learn while holding up a customer.

Another major theme extracted from the interviews is What is Actually Occurring during training (See Table 27). This theme is concerned mostly with who is doing the training and how the training is happening. Like the other major themes before this there are four sub-themes: Training Process, Sufficient Training, Trained by Co-workers, and Trained by Store Manager.

The first sub-theme is called Training Processes and was mentioned by 24 interviewees. Comments in this sub-theme concern how the employees were actually trained, which in almost all cases was by first being explained how to do something, then shown how to do it, and finally allowed to try it on their own. The second sub-theme, commented on by 15 interviewees, is Sufficient Training Received. Interviewees in this sub-theme reported that they had received enough training, felt comfortable working alone, and were happy with the instruction given to them. The last two sub-themes are very similar, they are: Trained by Co-workers and Trained by Store Manager. These are comments identifying who conducted the training they received as a new sales associate employee. A total of 15 interviewees reported that they were trained by co-workers while seven reported being trained by store managers.

The final major theme identified during the sales associate interviews is that of the Training Inconsistencies found between each interviewee (See Table 28). The inconsistencies (sub-themes) discovered are: the Lunch and Break Schedules, Training Time Length, Dress Code Expectations, and Procedures for Calling in Sick. All the comments within the sub-themes report different notions of what the store they work for expects. For instance, the 15 comments about the Lunch and Break Schedules range from responses that they don't have any breaks, that every two hours a ten minute break is allowed, or that in an eight hour shift two 15 minute breaks and one 30 lunch break is allowed. Comments on Training Time Length came from 10 interviewees with reports of the new employee receiving one night of training, to three days of training, to one week of training. Dress Code Expectations revealed nine different responses ranging from having to wear a smock and name tag to jeans and shirts without holes in them. Finally, inconsistencies regarding Procedures for Calling in Sick came from five interviewees. Some responses claim that they just need to call in 2-3hrs before their shift, some say to call in as soon

as possible, and others say to call in the day before you are sick. Interviewees were also asked to share if they knew certain items from a checklist that the interviewer ran through with them (See Tables 29 and 30). The checklist reveals the training inconsistencies as well.

#### *Archival Data: Exit Interview Analyses*

As mentioned in Chapter Three, an exit interview is a short paper and pencil survey mailed out by Company ABC's human resource department to employees who voluntarily terminated their position. A total of 116 exit interviews were given to the researcher for analysis.

The exit interview qualitative analysis was conducted using SPSS Text Analysis program version 1.5 in which themes were extracted for each individual question. A theme was developed if consistent responses were found when answering the questions. Although there were 116 interviews collected, the total response count per question could exceed 116 because of multiple reasons expressed for that question. The exit interview also contained three quantitative questions which were analyzed using SPSS 14.0.

The first question of the exit interview asked employees to share their feelings on the amount of work that was expected of them. Respondents were given four options to choose from (See Table 31). The results showed that 75% of the respondents felt their workload was appropriate all the time or appropriate most of the time but too much at times.

The next question inquired into what employees liked most about the position they are leaving. The most common response to this question was that they liked the Customers most, followed by fondness for their Co-workers and Staff, and then enjoyment of the Job in General (See Table 32). Most responses about the Customers centered on the enjoyment of helping them and getting to know them on a first name basis. A small number of former employees responded that there was Nothing they Liked about the job. 'What did you like least about the position you

Table 31

*Exit Interviews: Amount of Work Expected?*

| Item   | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Overworked, way too much to expect, all of the time.                   | 21        | 18.8%   |
| Most of the time the workload was just right, too much at times.       | 19        | 25.9%   |
| Appropriate, I worked at a good pace, not overworked, not underworked. | 55        | 49.1%   |
| Underworked, too little to do, I was really bored with nothing to do.  | 7         | 6.3%    |

are leaving' was the next question on the interview form. The most common responses for this question were concerning issues with the manager (See Table 33). A total of three themes were created for issues with the manager: General, Behavior, and Favoritism.

Comments that fell into the General theme did not explain what it was about the manager that they liked the least, the responses commonly read, "the manager." The manager Behavior theme contained comments about rudeness, inappropriate things that were said, and the manager's way of conducting the store. Interviewee comments about manager Favoritism included the mention of feelings that the store manager played favorites and often the favorite was a family member of significant other who worked at their store. The Specific Job Responsibilities were another thing respondents liked the least, as well as Scheduling Issues, other Co-workers and Customers, the Long Hours with No Breaks, the Pay, and the Lack of Training.

The exit interview form also asked the former employee what their reason for leaving was. The most cited reason for leaving, by far, was because of the Store Manager (See Table 34). The comments made by former employees dealt heavily with favoritism, employee treatment,

and disrespect. Other major reason reported for leaving Company ABC was Scheduling. Comments in this sub-theme mentioned not getting enough hours or getting too many night and weekend hours. The rest of the reasons for leaving include Conflict with School, Co-workers, and Another Job, as well as the Low Pay, Moved, Health and Family Issues, and because they were only looking for Part-time or Seasonal Employment.

Question number five on the exit interview asked if there are any issues the former employee would like to bring to the company's attention. The largest theme for this question was that no, there are no issues that need attention. Other themes identified were the negative comments about Store Managers, the need for the company to Respect their Employees, Better Wages, and Physical Store Improvement (See Table 35). Similar comments regarding store manager behavior and conduct in the previous question were mentioned here again.

The last open-ended question on the exit interview asked for recommendations to make Company ABC a better place to work. The largest portions of comments were regarding Store Managers (See Table 36). Most of the store manager comments were General Suggestions, although there were also suggestions to get New Management, to do a better job Training and Selecting Managers, and for better Communication with Managers. Other than advice toward store managers, comments were regarding Improving Physical Aspects of the store, Increasing Wages, Adding Benefits, and to always have Two People Working a shift. Finally, a very small group of respondents mentioned that Training and Scheduling should be improved.

The next question in the exit interview was a checklist question asking if the respondent would recommend Company ABC to a friend for possible employment (See Table 37). Over 75% responded 'yes, of course' or 'yes, with some reservations.'

The final question on the exit interview survey asked if anything could be done to help on the job or to prevent termination. If the respondent's answer was yes, they were asked to specify what could have been done. The results of this question show that nearly 50% of the voluntary

Table 37

*Exit Interviews: Recommend Friend to Work for Company ABC?*

| Item                        | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Yes, of course.             | 46        | 40.7%   |
| Yes, with some reservations | 40        | 35.1%   |
| No                          | 27        | 23.9%   |

terminations could have been prevented (See Table 38). Specific reasons mentioned for why the employee's termination could not have been prevented have most to do with the Store Manager (See Table 39). The comments provided about store managers cite the lack of respect, communication, and the prevalence of low morale. Other reasons reported for not being able to

Table 38

*Exit Interviews: Could Your Termination Have Been Prevented?*

| Item | Frequency | Percent |
|------|-----------|---------|
| Yes  | 54        | 48.6%   |
| No   | 57        | 51.4%   |

prevent termination include Low Wages, Not Enough Hours, Lack of Respect (from others besides the store manager), and not having any Opportunity for Advancement.

*Archival Data: Employee Wage Analyses*

The hourly wages of all current employees (529) at Company ABC were analyzed as a whole, by geographic district (See Map), and NACS districts. The average hourly wage for sales

associate employees is highest in metro areas (\$8.29/hr) and lowest in northern Minnesota, northern Wisconsin, and Michigan (\$6.89/hr) (See Table 40). When wages are analyzed and compared to NACS districts the results show that Company ABC pays a higher

Table 40

*Current Employee Hourly Wages by Geographic District: Descriptive Statistics*

| Geographic District     | N   | Minimum | Maximum | Mean   | SD     |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| Northern MN, WI, & MI   | 85  | \$5.50  | \$10.19 | \$6.89 | \$.89  |
| SD & Western MN         | 115 | \$6.15  | \$11.25 | \$7.19 | \$.98  |
| Western WI & Eastern MN | 131 | \$6.25  | \$11.25 | \$7.94 | \$.98  |
| Metro Areas             | 198 | \$6.15  | \$13.25 | \$8.29 | \$1.02 |

Mean wage in the Midwest district by \$.81. On the other hand, Company ABC's mean wage for sales associate employees in the Plains district is \$.35 lower than NACS (See Table 41). Overall, Company ABC's mean wage for sales associate employees (\$7.74) is higher than the NACS national average (\$7.72). The researcher would like to note that on June 1, 2006 the state of Wisconsin raised the minimum wage to \$6.50. The data Company ABC shared with the researcher is based on the minimum wage prior to the raise.

*Archival Data: Termination Reason Analyses*

The 3,454 sales associate employees who had their employment terminated between 2000 and 2005 are analyzed in this section of the chapter. Descriptive statistics reveal that abandoning the job and accepting another job are the two main reasons for termination of employment at Company ABC (See Table 42). Another interesting finding is that the mean number of days worked for employees who abandon their job is among the lowest in the group of termination

reasons. Due to the impracticality of conducting statistical analyses on the 33 individual termination reasons, they were put into groups based on their similarities (See Table 43).

ANOVA statistics were run to examine differences in age and tenure between the six groups.

Results showed statistically significant differences in both age ( $F(5, 3058) = 7.80, p < .01, \eta =$

Table 42

*Grouped Sales Associate Employee Termination Reasons Since 2000: Descriptive Statistics*

| Termination Reason Grouping   | Number of Employees | Number of Days Worked |      |      |     |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|------|------|-----|
|   |                     | Min                   | Max  | Mean | SD  |
| <b>Group 1:</b>   |                     |                       |      |      |     |
| abandoned job, didn't return from leave of absence, never started work, quit, walked off the job.   | 1100                | 0                     | 3076 | 217  | 389 |
| <b>Group 2:</b>   |                     |                       |      |      |     |
| careless money handling, charged w/theft, dishonesty, excessive shortages, falsified records, suspicion of theft.   | 323                 | 1                     | 2725 | 221  | 358 |
| <b>Group 3:</b>   |                     |                       |      |      |     |
| conflict w/co-workers, conflict w/childcare, conflict w/other job, conflict w/school, restricted availability, maternity, personal/family issues, transportation problem. | 467                 | 0                     | 6464 | 328  | 581 |

| Termination Reason Grouping  | Number of Employees | Number of Days Worked |      |      |     |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|------|------|-----|
|  |                     | Min                   | Max  | Mean | SD  |
| Group 4:   |                     |                       |      |      |     |
| destruction of property,<br>insubordination, unacceptable work,<br>violation of company policies,<br>excessive absences/tardiness. | 328                 | 0                     | 3230 | 252  | 486 |
| Group 5:   |                     |                       |      |      |     |
| accepted another job, entered military,<br>moved.  | 790                 | 0                     | 3898 | 405  | 541 |
| Group 6:   |                     |                       |      |      |     |
| position eliminated, reduction in force,<br>store closed.  | 43                  | 0                     | 2060 | 423  | 547 |

Outliers have been removed; Term reasons retired, unknown/no code, transfer to new company code, and transfer to other company have been removed; N=3436

.11) and tenure ( $F(5, 3051) = 14.37, p < .01, \eta = .15$ ) between the groups. Using the Student-Newman-Keuls (SNK) post-hoc test, age differences were found between Group 1 ( $M = 26.78$  yrs) and Group 3 ( $M = 30.85$  yrs) as well as with Group 2 ( $M = 27.64$  yrs) and Group 3. No statistically significant differences were found between any of the other groups. The SNK post-hoc test to examine differences in tenure revealed that Group 1 (216.96 days), Group 2 (251.80 days), and Group 4 (269.14 days) are statistically different from Group 5 (404.66 days) and Group 6 (423.23 days).

Using the assigned groups in the table above, analyses were conducted in relation to the type of turnover occurring at Company ABC. The results revealed that almost 70% of the

turnover at Company ABC is voluntary turnover while 11% of the turnover is for unknown reasons (See Table 44). Another ANOVA statistic was conducted to examine gender differences between employees who were terminated involuntarily and those terminated voluntarily. Through this analysis statistical significance was found between men and women, with women (1780 voluntary terminations) committing voluntary turnover significantly more than men

Table 44

## Voluntary vs. Involuntary Turnover

| Turnover Type | Number | Percent |
|---------------|--------|---------|
| Involuntary   | 698    | 20%     |
| Voluntary     | 2359   | 69%     |
| Unknown       | 385    | 11%     |

(1,286 voluntary terminations) ( $F(1) = 22.70, p < .01, \eta = .08$ ).

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to determine any gender differences in tenure as well as age. The analysis found that the males ( $M = 27.15, SD = 10.66$ ) who have been terminated are significantly younger than females ( $M = 29.36, SD = 10.46$ ), ( $t(3440) = 2.134, p < .01$ ). T-tests also revealed that males ( $M = 275.51, SD = 533.56$ ) have shorter lengths of tenure compared to females ( $M = 316.14, SD = 565.45$ ), ( $t(3450) = 6.077, p < .01$ ).

Finally, an analysis was conducted to examine the percentage of terminations that occur near holidays. The number of terminations that occurred seven days prior to a major holiday (New Year's, Easter, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas) were recorded between the years 2001 and 2005. A total of 467 employees were terminated during this time which is equivalent to 14.9% of the total number of terminations.

*Archival Data: Turnover Analyses*

In this section turnover rates between the years 2001 and 2005 for Company ABC are analyzed. Turnover rate for the project was calculated using the same formula used by NACS (NACS, 2005b). The formula used to calculate turnover rate is seen in Figure 1:

Figure 1. Turnover Rate Equation

$$\frac{\text{Total number of terminations for a position in a given year}}{\text{Number of employees in the position as of December 31 for the given year}} \times 100.$$

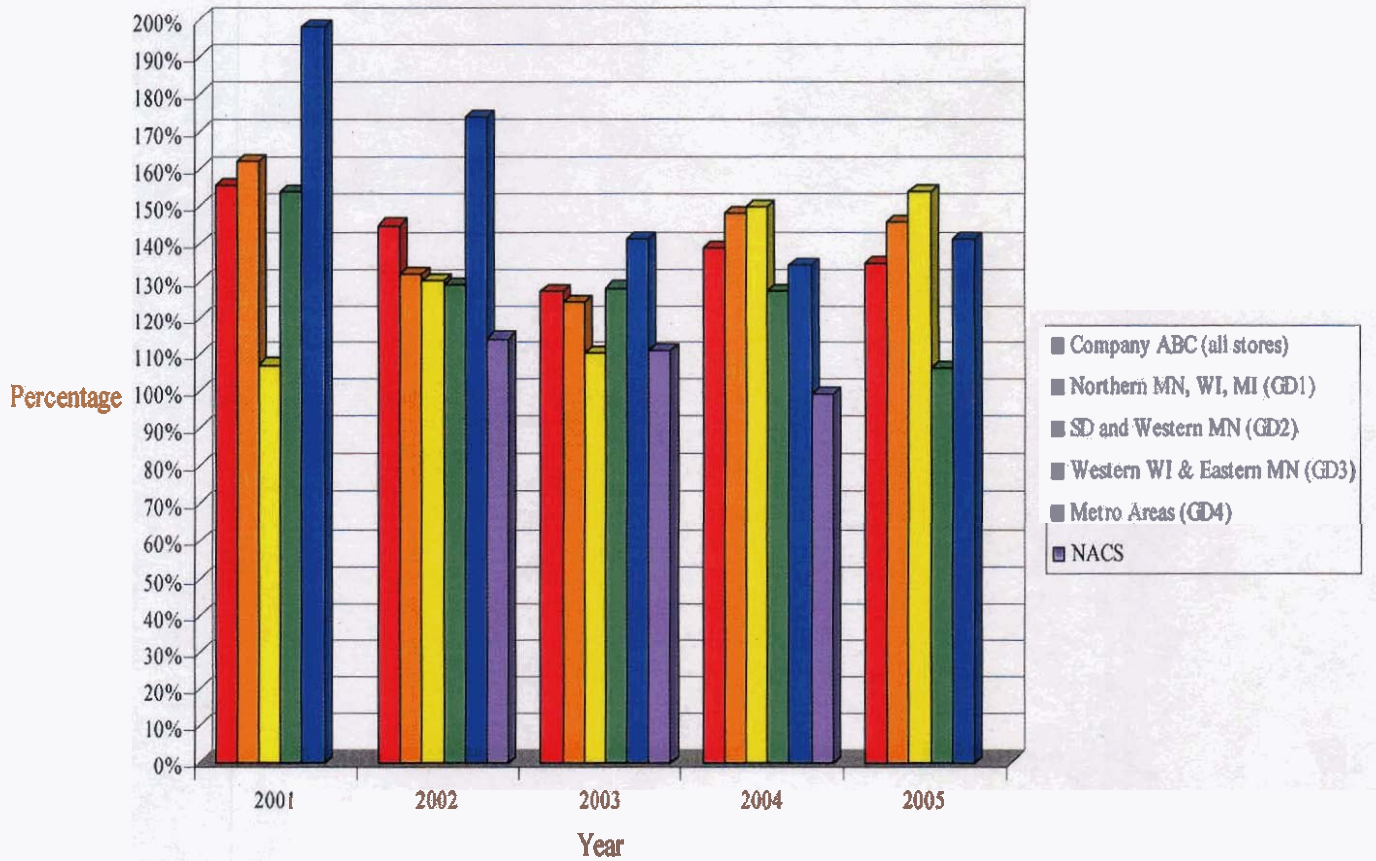
Analyses were conducted to determine the turnover rate for Company ABC as a whole, for each geographic district, and for each individual store.

Turnover rates for the entire company ranged from a high in 2001 of 156% to a low in 2003 of 127% (See Figure 2). The average turnover rate for these five years is 140%. The turnover rates of the geographic districts vary from year to year with the highest turnover rate occurring in 2001 for the metro areas which had a turnover rate of 198%. In 2005 the western Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota district had the lowest turnover rate of any geographic district for any year at 106%. National turnover rates are included on the figure as well for the years in which NACS collected data. Company ABC has always experienced higher turnover rates than the national average. Turnover rates were also calculated for each individual store within Company ABC (See Table 45). Rates were calculated by store for the five year period and an average turnover rate was calculated for each store over the five years. Through this analysis five

stores that stand out for their exceptionally low average turnover rate over the five year period:

store numbers 33 (31%), 25 (38%), 32 (61%), 43 (69%), and 48 (71%).

Figure 2. Company, District, and NACS Turnover Rates by Year



## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this project was to examine the effectiveness of Company ABC's selection tools and training procedures so that improvements can be made and sales associate turnover reduced. This was accomplished by surveying store managers about the usage and usefulness of selection tools, interviewing recently trained sales associate employees, and by examining archival data such as exit interviews, termination reason data, and wage data. The results of the project provide significant insight into the reasons for turnover at Company ABC and reveal opportunities for improvement. The rest of this section will discuss the major conclusions of the research as well as the recommendations for Company ABC.

### *Conclusions*

The research conducted to examine the selection tools used in hiring sales associate employees found that store managers do not see the usefulness of reference checks or past employment checks and therefore do not use them often. The main reasons for not using these are: (1) only limited or useless information could be obtained through their use, (2) not trusting the reference or past employer, (3) and the concern about legal issues arising. According to the survey, store managers would use these if they had more information about the checks. Another important finding that could be contributing to the limited use of these checks is the confusion between the two. A number of store managers seemed to be confused about the differences between the checks and the types of information they should be getting from them.

Another significant finding about the selection tools was that many store managers would like more information on how to use these. Most of these comments had to do with not knowing what questions are the best or what they are allowed ask during interviews, reference checks, and past employment checks. More information was also a common theme regarding background

checks as well, but in a different way. Store managers want more information shared with them regarding why a potential employee could not be hired.

The research conducted to examine the training procedures of Company ABC also provided some important findings. What seemed to be most important to the trainees were having support from their trainers and the positive attitudes from the co-workers. This support eased the minds of the new employees allowing them to relax more and feel comfortable in their new environment. Another significant finding was the identification of deficits in the training of sales associates. Through the research inconsistencies were found between trainees (i.e., dress code, lunch and break schedules) as well as many specific training suggestions (i.e., more convenient training times, more training on paperwork, and closing shifts). The identification of these deficits can be used to guide changes in the training procedures. The results of the study revealed both its positive and negative aspects of the current training procedures and identified areas for improvement.

The archival data was analyzed to get a better understanding of why employees are leaving Company ABC. According to the exit interviews, store managers are the main reason for turnover. Respondents commented that store managers engaged in favoritism, disrespect, and treated their employees poorly. The negative store manager comments were the most common theme on the exit interview form. Another common theme was the dissatisfaction with scheduling and hours worked. Most of the dissatisfaction in the responses came from either not getting enough hours of work per week or from consistently being scheduled to work weekends and nights. This data has provided significant insight into areas of improvement needed to obtain the goal of reducing turnover at Company ABC.

Archival data also revealed that Company ABC has been experiencing turnover rates above the national average over the last five years. The high turnover rates are especially troubling since 70% of the company's turnover is voluntary. In fact, the most cited reason for leaving Company ABC is abandonment of the job. Other common reasons for the voluntary termination of employment were accepting other jobs, unknown reasons, moving, and walking off the job.

In summary, this project revealed areas for improvement in the way sales associates are selected and trained, as well as insight into the reasons for high turnover within Company ABC. The next section will provide suggestions and recommendations based on the research results to improve selection methods, training procedures, and to reduce turnover.

### *Recommendations*

In general, it appears that there is a lack of communication between store managers and sales associate employees as well as between store managers and the home office. The communication problem can be seen in the research regarding selection tools (i.e., confusion between tools), training (i.e., inconsistencies), and in the archival data (i.e., respecting employees, scheduling). Selection method recommendations will be discussed first.

The first recommendation for improving sales associate selection is to train store managers how to properly use the selection tools. The research from this project suggests that selection tool training should focus on defining each selection tool, the reason for using the tool (i.e., explain what information is supposed to be gained through its use), how to get good and useful information from each tool, and what legal issues are associated with these tools. Communicating to the store managers what questions can and should be asked during an

interview, reference check, or past employment check could significantly increase tool usage and result in better employee selection.

The second recommendation for improving selection is to increase communication between the human resources department and store managers regarding background checks. The research from this study suggests that store managers are frustrated with the length of time a background check takes and the lack of information from these background checks. These issues could be discussed during the selection tool training mentioned above. Increasing the communication regarding background checks is very important to an organization in the convenience store industry. Background checks are always going to be a part of the selection process for the main reason of identifying applicants with criminal backgrounds, especially theft (Vavra, 1999). The use of background checks could also potentially save over \$13,000 in retail theft per year (Vavra, 1999).

The last suggestion to improve sales associate selection is to begin conducting structured rather than unstructured interviews. Structured interviews have proven to be much more valid in selecting the best employee than unstructured interviews (Campion et al., 1997; Judge et al., 2000; McDaniel et al., 1994; Pulakos, 2005). Structured interviews will allow for more accurate and improved comparisons between job candidates, ultimately resulting in better employee selection (Campion et al., 1997; Judge et al., 2000; Pulakos, 2005).

The evaluation of the training and orientation at Company ABC found both positive and negative aspects to Company ABC's training and orientation program. The researcher recommends Company ABC standardize both the training and the orientation. Standardizing the training and orientation will allow for upper management to be informed as to what kind of training is happening, allow upper management and store managers to recognize needs and

deficiencies in training, provide all employees the same knowledge base, and make it easier for employees to fill in or switch shifts with each other. In order to standardize the training and orientation, it will be important to look into the sales associate interviews themes to examine current successes and deficiencies. The immediate result of the standardization will be the employee's sound knowledge of the job and its duties and therefore increase their level of comfort and support. Ultimately standardization of the training and orientation should increase the tenure of sales associate employees.

The archival data analyzed provided a few suggestions to help alleviate the turnover problem in general. First is to show store managers how much turnover costs their store and develop an incentive program to reduce it. Other research studies have proven that not only do incentive programs increase employee production but they also can reduce voluntary turnover (Blakemore, Low, & Ormiston, 1987; Chonko, Tanner, & Weeks, 1992; Hamstra, 1998; Peterson & Luthans, 2006).

Although incentives can be either financial (e.g., monetary incentives) or non-financial (e.g., recognition and performance feedback) research suggests that financial incentives are the most desired by employees (Chonko et al., 1992). Furthermore, financial incentives have been found to be slightly better at reducing turnover rates over time (Peterson & Luthans, 2006).

When developing an incentive program it is important to think of salespeople as customers to create the needed buy-in to the plan (Chonko et al., 1992). The results of a well planned incentive program can include increased profit, employee morale, employee production, and reduced turnover (Hamstra, 1998). The Chuck E. Cheese pizza party chain provides a good example of a successful incentive program. Their goal was to find a way to motivate cast members. To do this the company awarded "scratch-and-win" tickets which had mystery point

vales and could be redeemed for prizes (i.e., portable radios, gift certificates to dinner-house restaurants) to cashiers and hosts who exceeded sale goals for six specific add-on items. The tickets that were not winners were worth points toward other prizes so that there were no 'loser' tickets (Hamstra, 1998). During the time the incentive program ran managers were compensated financially with bonuses and with prizes from vendors. This 13 week contest resulted in a \$900,000 sales increase (\$660,000 when the cost of the contest is subtracted) and a reduction in turnover rate from 159% to 138% (Hamstra, 1998).

Another suggestion is to examine store manager behavior, conduct, and communication. The exit interviews suggest something is happening within the interactions of store managers and sales associates that are causing many to quit. Published research regarding the interactions between managers and employees suggest that fair treatment (Jones & Skarlicki, 2003), pro-social behavior (George & Bettenhausen, 1990), and supervisor support (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002; Firth et al., 2004) are all associated with lower levels of voluntary turnover. Interactional justice, which is the perceived fairness of treatment by organizational leaders is found to have effects on turnover as well (Conlon, Meyer, & Nowakowski, 2005; Jones & Skarlicki, 2003).

Whether employees are treated with sensitivity, dignity, respect, and are provided explanations for outcomes all affect interactional justice (Jones & Skarlicki, 2003). Research has found that employees with high levels of interactional justice are less likely to quit while employees with low levels are likely to turnover (Conlon et al., 2005; Jones & Skarlicki, 2003). Included in the behavior and conduct examination should be input into how scheduling is done since it was found to be a main reason for voluntary termination. Analyzing store manager

behavior and conduct will reveal potential areas for improvement and if these areas are improved, voluntary turnover could be reduced.

It is also important for Company ABC to continue collecting data on turnover so that it can successfully adapt to the needs of their employees. One way of doing this is by updating, improving, and continuing the use of exit interviews. The exit interviews often obtain the true reason employees leave and provide excellent insight into what's working and what isn't with in a company (Impact Magazine, 2005; Zimmerman, 2005).

Overall, this study has examined Company ABC's selection methods and training procedures and also provided recommendations to reduce sales associate turnover. This study has identified deficits in which the company can take steps toward improving as well as successes in which to build upon. Although this study has provided useful information to make decisions and changes toward reducing turnover, it is only the first step. It is the researchers hope that the recommendations are considered and ongoing research continues toward reducing sales associate turnover at Company ABC.

Table 1

*Store Manager Survey: How often do you do a Background Check?*

| Response                       | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| My store is in SD or MI.       | 8         | 13.3%   |
| Never done a background check. | 1         | 1.7%    |
| Less than 25% of the time.     | 3         | 5.0%    |
| 25-50% of the time.            | 0         | 0%      |
| 51-75% of the time.            | 3         | 5.0%    |
| More than 75% of the time.     | 45        | 75.0%   |

Table 2

*Store Manager Survey: Reasons for Not Using Background Checks*

| Theme (N)       | Survey Responses  |
|-----------------|---|
| Other Screening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Lack of information that is given by the previous employer.</li> </ul>  |
| Tools Ruled Out | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●The person may give a bad first impression.</li> </ul>  |
| Applicant (7)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Have no interest in hiring after seeing other results.</li> <li>●Generally if an employee gets into any sort of trouble I am the first to hear about it. This store is located in a smaller community where pretty much everyone knows everyone.</li> <li>●After rethinking about the interview may feel that individual isn't quite the person I was looking for, or something just didn't seem right. Also how they scored in the certain areas of the survey.</li> </ul> |

Table 4

*Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Background Checks*

| Theme (N)          | Survey Responses  |
|--------------------|---|
| Need A Quicker     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Would like to see faster turn around on data.</li> </ul>   |
| Response Time (14) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Need a quicker response time.</li> <li>● It's not so much that I think background checks are useless. It takes so long for them to come back I've waited as long as 9 days for some to come back and they've been good. So it's not because there no good. When most managers need to hire they need to hire now. I've also had people get a different job because it took so long.</li> <li>● Wish the process could be faster.</li> <li>● It would be helpful if there was a faster way to get the results of the background checks. Some take more than a week. It would be nice if we had an online one that we could check ourselves.</li> <li>● That they are back to the store in a more timely fashion, most of the time they are but there have been times when we have to call to check with the office.</li> <li>● We need a quicker response time. I have to wait 4 days for an answer.</li> </ul> |
| Problems (5)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Information the previous employer can give is limited.</li> </ul>  |

| Theme (N)         | Survey Responses  |
|-------------------|---|
| Good Tool/Would   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●No idea how accurate they really are.</li> <li>●May exclude a deserving person.</li> <li>●I use them all the time but there are times I feel I should have to. I know the person and I live in a small town.</li> <li>●Some fall through the cracks.</li> </ul>   |
| Like to Use Them  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●It's a great tool.</li> </ul>   |
| (5)               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●South Dakota should have them.</li> <li>●I think it would be nice to do them here if the cost wasn't so high.</li> <li>●Very useful in that people can not always tell you about past problems.</li> <li>●I would never hire anyone without doing a background check, and if it were to come back "bad" I would not hire them.</li> </ul>     |
| More Information  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I'm never really sure if they are just job jumpers or if there is something to be concerned about.</li> </ul>   |
| With Response (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Supplement the findings with research, statistics, or probabilities about the applicants' future behavior. In other words, perhaps the applicant was arrested for petty theft. Based upon solid research in the field, that person has 77% (for example) chance of stealing from an employer. THAT'S some helpful information to a</li> </ul> |

| Theme (N)  | Survey Responses   |
|------------|--|
|            | <p>manager. Knowing what kind of criminal history the person may have means very little unless there's a frame of reference for it. Otherwise, hiring managers just have to go on "instinct", which is a pretty lame way to select talent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●When background checks come back there is no information shared at store level it is ok to hire or do not hire. More explanation needed to make a fully informed decision.</li> <li>●I wish they would give us more info on the checks.</li> <li>●I've had some applicants tell me that they made a bad choice a while ago and it was a minor issue one time mistake and they can't believe it showed up. We have no clue what the deciding factor was they just tell us to pass sometimes people mess up and do change and in one I feel I lost a good person I witness down the road at my competitor where she works.</li> </ul> |
| Minors (4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Background checks are good to find bad people, but what about people who haven't had a job? We hire a lot of younger people who don't have a long work record.</li> <li>●Anyone under 18 yrs old, it's a waste of time because the state is not able to give out any info on any minors.</li> <li>●Background checks would be more useful if they could also be run on minors.</li> </ul>  |

Table 6

*Store Manager Survey: Reasons for Not Doing Reference Checks*

| Theme (N)                     | Survey Comments  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Limited or Poor<br>Info. (16) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Most of the time they can't tell you anything, except that they worked for them.</li> <li>●Most businesses won't tell you anything. So I find it a waste of time.</li> <li>●If the person has been out of work for a while it is hard to get a reference from a previous employer as turn over in area is high. If they have had large gaps in employment history or multiple jobs in a year chances are that they may not be in good standing. Personal references are always biased.</li> <li>●I usually do call for all the applicants. The former employer 95% of the time won't give out any info other than yes they worked here they were on time or I can't give you any other info, other than they were employed here.</li> <li>●Information that is necessary is rarely allowed or shared.</li> </ul> |
| Don't Trust<br>Reference (10) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●A lot of people put down people who would only give them a good one. Some even put down people who have worked at the store they are applying at.</li> <li>●Why would you have a reference that would give you a bad reference?</li> <li>●Do not trust the person to put down an unbiased reference. We try to hire people from the neighborhood</li> </ul>  |

| Theme (N)                   | Survey Comments  |
|-----------------------------|--|
|                             | <p>that current employees already know.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● They only give the names of people who will tell us the good not always the truth.</li> <li>● Everyone has personal references that are good; friends and relatives are going to give a positive response.</li> <li>● I believe that their friends and family members and they are going to lie for them.</li> </ul>                              |
| No Time (8)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Not enough time.</li> <li>● Most of the time you needed the employee last week.</li> <li>● Too busy and I do a pretty good job at hiring.</li> </ul>  |
| Legalities/Liability<br>(6) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The responses received on most are of little value due to liability concerns.</li> <li>● Do not know what questions to ask and the legality of it.</li> <li>● Most companies will only tell you if they worked there and the dates - too worried about liability to say anything negative about the person.</li> <li>● No info from any other company. Fear of lawyers and answers</li> </ul> |
| Know Applicant              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Know the applicants family or a referral.</li> </ul>  |
| Personally (4)              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I already know the person, or know the place where they worked.</li> <li>● Often know the candidate in question.</li> </ul>   |

| Theme (N)          | Survey Comments  |
|--------------------|--|
| Need Forms (3)     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Need forms.</li> <li>●Personal references are usually not reliable maybe if we had a form to follow on what types of questions to ask - I think that would be useful.</li> <li>●I don't have a form to follow for it.</li> </ul> |
| Didn't Know it was | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Never really thought I had to.</li> </ul>  |
| Needed (2)         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Didn't realize it was needed and most previous employers do not give any information about them.</li> </ul>  |
| Other (4)          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I like to hear what people have to say about that person.</li> <li>●Employee verification.</li> <li>●Just started hiring process.</li> <li>●Applicant is recommended by current associate.</li> </ul>                            |
| No Response=14     |  |

Table 7

*Store Manager Survey: How useful to you are reference checks?*

| Response     | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| Very Useless | 2         | 3.3%    |
| Useless      | 19        | 31.7%   |
| Useful       | 28        | 46.7%   |
| Very Useful  | 11        | 18.3%   |

Table 8

*Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Reference Checks*

| Theme (N)                         | Survey Responses   |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Limited Information<br><br>(10)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Usually do not get any information except dates of hire.</li> <li>● Very limited on what they can give you for information.</li> <li>● Limited information can be obtained.</li> <li>● Unfortunately the past employers can't tell us everything they would like to or we need to know.</li> <li>● Other than asking about an applicant's re-hire status with his/her former employer, very little can be legally discussed.</li> <li>● They are very helpful if you can talk to someone who will share information.</li> </ul>   |
| Trusting the<br><br>Reference (9) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● People have to be honest with who they put down.</li> <li>● I selected "very useful" for question #6, but this answer applies only if an honest reference is given.</li> <li>● The only reference I would take in to account is one from someone I know personally.</li> <li>● The person already knows the applicant and say whatever I want to hear.</li> <li>● Probably the hardest part of hiring it's someone else's word on a future employee.</li> <li>● Sometimes you can tell by the tone of the former employer's voice if the employee was ok or not, even if</li> </ul> |

| Theme (N)         | Survey Responses   |
|-------------------|--|
| Comments and      | <p>they won't give you much info on them. Say you ask them if the employee was on time, when they worked and the employer hesitates in answering, then I think that either something was up with the employee or the employer couldn't remember they employee.</p>   |
| Questions (4)     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Not sure that reference checks would help maybe they would? Not sure.</li> <li>●Even with good references the associate still doesn't turn out good.</li> <li>●I think they should always be done.</li> <li>●What type of questions can you actually ask the reference?</li> </ul> |
| Too Much Time (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Sometimes response time.</li> <li>●Response time – sometimes get the run-around or phone tag.</li> </ul>   |

Table 9

*Store Manager Survey: How often do you do a follow-up interview?*

| Response                      | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never conducted an interview. | 1         | 1.7%    |
| Less than 25% of the time.    | 8         | 13.3%   |
| 25-50% of the time.           | 5         | 8.3%    |
| 51-75% of the time.           | 7         | 11.7%   |
| More than 75% of the time.    | 39        | 65.0%   |

Table 10

*Store Manager Survey: Reasons For Not Doing Follow-up Interviews*

| Theme (N)   | Survey Responses   |
|---|--|
| Decision Made After<br>1 <sup>st</sup> Interview (11) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●The only time I do a follow-up is if the follow-up questions are something that concern me.</li> <li>●One interview is suffice to: -gather info on the person's personality -establish rapport -determine suitability. Going over critical points (or "areas for concern", I forget the terminology) is something that can be done out of a interview setting. Although helpful to be aware of, I doubt many managers look at them. The manager that trained me did not put any stake on them.</li> <li>●If I know I like that employee and he or she fits the schedule then I don't need to.</li> <li>●If I feel that I have done a full interview and am comfortable with the person, and the test comes back with no major highlights then I will sometime let the second interview go.</li> <li>●I have made up my mind at the first interview. I wouldn't waste the time or money on all other hiring steps.</li> </ul> |
| Already Know  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●First impressions or again they were referred.</li> </ul>  |
| Applicant/Trust                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Most hires I know, or are friends of people who work for me that I trust.</li> </ul>   |
| Referral (4)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Already know the people getting hired.</li> <li>●Referral.</li> </ul>  |
| No Response=40  |  |

Table 11

*Store Manager Survey: How useful to you are follow-up interviews?*

| Response     | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| Very Useless | 3         | 5.0%    |
| Useless      | 0         | 0%      |
| Useful       | 10        | 16.7%   |
| Very Useful  | 47        | 78.3%   |

Table 12

*Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Follow-up Interviews*

| Theme (N)           | Survey Responses  |
|---------------------|---|
| Training Needed (6) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="510 423 1915 894">●Never rehired a past employee. In past jobs I hired a lot. One thing I learned is that hiring 100% of the people that you interview means your standards are most likely too low. I suspect many people in this company hire almost 100% of the people (or most likely, the first person) that they interview. This will probably get them horrible results. However, most managers receive no guidance or training on this concept or process. My suggestion is that the company put time and effort into an actual, structured training for managers (new AND experienced) regarding the ENTIRE hiring process: Effective recruiting-screening-interviewing-initial orientation.</li> <li data-bbox="510 938 1915 1117">●Would like some feedback on the type of questions that would be good to use in an interview, the type of questions not allowed and whether or not it is legal to give any type of math or similar test to indicate whether or not this person really does have something on the ball.</li> <li data-bbox="510 1161 1915 1268">●We as a company need to have a booklet with questions involving situations. I had one when I interviewed as the H.R person for Shopko and I still use the same question process now that I am here.</li> <li data-bbox="510 1312 1915 1341">●More training on the types of questions to ask and how to ask them in order to get the most honest answer.</li> </ul> |

| Theme (N)                    | Survey Responses   |
|------------------------------|--|
| Concerns (5)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Very few of us have received any training in conducting effective interviews.</li> <li>● I would like some questions to ask. Maybe like a standard question (some good ones).</li> <li>● Too bad there are so many good actors out there. It would be nice if they would show their true colors before hiring them instead of after the fact.</li> <li>● Some of the worst interviews end up to be the best employees. Some of the best interviews have ended up being terrible employees.</li> <li>● None, some of them seem very honest until you hire them.</li> </ul> |
| Comments and Suggestions (4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I generally interview a minimum of 3 applicants before I make a decision.</li> <li>● I think that these are 2 good tools.</li> <li>● Interviewing someone does not mean you have to hire them.</li> <li>● Should always interview.</li> </ul>   |
| No Answer=41                 |  |

Table 13

*Store Manager Survey: After interviewing how often do you give the Orion survey?*

| Response                   | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never.                     | 1         | 1.7%    |
| Less than 25% of the time. | 0         | 0%      |
| 25-50% of the time.        | 5         | 8.3%    |
| 51-75% of the time.        | 16        | 26.7%   |
| More than 75% of the time. | 38        | 63.3%   |

Table 15

*Store Manager Survey: Reasons for Not Doing past Employment Checks*

| Theme (N)  | Survey Comments   |
|--|---|
| Limited/Useless Information (17)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●It is very difficult to get meaningful information.</li> <li>●It doesn't really tell me anything.</li> <li>●Past employment checks give me no information. The only thing that they will verify is whether or not they were employed and the dates of their employment.</li> <li>●Most employers won't say anything other than whether or not they worked there.</li> <li>●Employers give little or no real info.</li> </ul>      |
| Trust Employee Recommendations and Referrals (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●My hires have been recruited using one sole technique: employee recommendation. Employment checks are good to check the work ethic, work habits, and circumstances of leave. In my few hiring cases, there was little need to investigate these since the reputation of this employee was "guaranteed" by another trusted, loyal employee.</li> <li>●Employee recommendation.</li> <li>●Referred by family or friends.</li> </ul> |

| Theme (N)                    | Survey Comments   |
|------------------------------|---|
| No More                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I do them as a part of the reference check.</li> </ul>  |
| Screening Needed<br>(4)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Demeanor in initial interview. Candidates may not have personal work history. Candidate may not be what I'm looking for so I move along with the process.</li> <li>●I go by the interview that I do.</li> <li>●Unneeded.</li> </ul>                       |
| Legal Issues (3)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●We were told not to call people because of the legal issue that can popup.</li> <li>●I assume that there is little information that I can obtain legally to help in making a hiring decision.</li> <li>●They by law can not tell you anything.</li> </ul> |
| Not Enough Time<br>(3)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Time and lack of.</li> <li>●Time, employers give little or no real info.</li> <li>●Not enough time.</li> </ul>  |
| Already Know                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Know their work history from personal experience.</li> </ul>  |
| Personal Work<br>History (3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●If they worked around here I know if they worked there or not.</li> <li>●Some of the employees I hire are 16 or they are customers I have met.</li> </ul>   |

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| Theme (N)      | Survey Comments  |
|----------------|--|
| Seasonal       | ● Sometimes we needed the employee last week sometimes it's just a seasonal worker.  |
| Employees (3)  | ● Sometimes we needed the employee last week or sometimes it's just a seasonal worker.<br>● Sometimes it's their first job sometimes they are just seasonal workers. |
| Need Forms (2) | ● Need forms.<br>● Need a form.  |
| Other (2)      | ● Never hired before now.<br>● No phone number for past employers.   |

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Table 16

*Store Manager Survey: How useful to you are past employment checks?*

| Response     | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| Very Useless | 9         | 15.0%   |
| Useless      | 19        | 31.7%   |
| Useful       | 23        | 38.3%   |
| Very Useful  | 9         | 15.0%   |

Table 17

*Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Past Employment Checks*

| Theme (N)        | Survey Responses   |
|------------------|--|
| Information      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Some past employers won't give you honest answer because of the reason why people leave.</li> </ul>  |
| Misleading or    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Information is limited previous employer attitudes can be misinterpreted.</li> </ul>   |
| Useless (11)     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●You don't really know until the first two weeks that they work here.</li> <li>●Depends if they actually say anything or not.</li> <li>●Past employment information can be misleading.</li> <li>●In a high turnover area it may be hard to find a supervisor still in the position or company that will remember the person.</li> <li>●With the limits on the information that a past employer can give you it is not always helpful to call them. However you can get a lot just from the tone and wordage.</li> </ul> |
| Never Used/Want  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I have never done one.</li> </ul>  |
| More Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●More information would be nice.</li> </ul>   |
| About Tool (6)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Really haven't used this avenue.</li> <li>●I haven't utilized this step enough to consider it a useful tool.</li> </ul>  |

| Theme (N)                   | Survey Responses  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Suggestions and<br>Tips (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● They don't give references anymore.</li> <li>● What types of questions can you ask a past employer?</li> <li>● Good tool.</li> <li>● People change with jobs, current lifestyles, etc....</li> <li>● These also are a must for me. You might not find out a lot, but one important question you can ask is if they would rehire this person.</li> <li>● They only give you required info, sometimes you can tell by the tone of their voice if there was a problem with a past employee, by the way they hesitate when answering a question.</li> <li>● With the limits on the information that a past employer can give you it is not always helpful to call them. However you can get a lot just from the tone and wordage.</li> </ul> |
| No Response=37              |   |

Table 18

*Store Manager Survey: Other Screening Tools Used*

| Theme (N)                        | Survey Responses   |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Current Employee                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Other employees.</li> </ul>  |
| Opinions (12)                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I always ask my active employees if they know applicant and what if anything they can tell me about them.</li> <li>●Check with present employees.</li> <li>●I ask my assistants for a first impression.</li> <li>●I may ask my assistant manager to sit in.</li> <li>●Ask my employee if they know them what they know about them – and my kids (it’s a small town).</li> <li>●Other employees that approach me with thoughts or info. Family friends</li> </ul> |
| Body Language and Appearance (6) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I look for good communication skills. i.e. nice firm handshake with eye contact. If they can’t look at me during an interview or upon first visit my concern is that they will be unable to do it with a customer.</li> <li>●Eye contact.</li> <li>●On time, looks (how dressed), personality.</li> <li>●Eye contact and gut feeling.</li> <li>●Appearance, dressed well, clean, shows up for interview early or on time.</li> </ul>                             |

| Theme (N)                  | Survey Responses  |
|----------------------------|---|
| Word of Mouth (5)          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Watching body language.</li> <li>●Word of mouth.</li> <li>●If hiring a student like talking to teachers and coaches.</li> <li>●If the person is from the area, and I've seen them speaking with other people I would ask then other people about the person. I observe his or her actions when interviewing, and re-ask questions to see if they come up with a different answer.</li> <li>●Talking to others who know these people.</li> <li>●Small town word of mouth.</li> </ul> |
| Interview Questions<br>(4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●During the interview I always ask the applicant to tell me a good situation that happened and a bad situation and how they handled it.</li> <li>●Set of interview questions.</li> <li>●Ask a lot of questions in the interview.</li> <li>●I always ask a good applicant to describe a good experience through previous job and to tell of a bad experience and how they handled that situation.</li> </ul>  |
| Other (6)                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Just be honest with them.</li> </ul>  |

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| Theme (N)            | Survey Responses  |
|----------------------|---|
|                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>●Get to know the person.</li><li>●Intuition and character assessment.</li><li>●Try to hire outgoing people who are not afraid to plus sell.</li><li>●I have a check list that I go by.</li><li>●Newspaper if they have been in the police beat.</li></ul> |
| <hr/> No Response=27 |   |

Table 21

*Store Manager Survey: When rehiring a past employee, how often do you call HR for eligibility?*

| Response                   | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Never call HR.             | 4         | 6.7%    |
| Less than 25% of the time. | 5         | 8.3%    |
| 25-50% of the time.        | 2         | 3.3%    |
| 51-75% of the time.        | 5         | 8.3%    |
| More than 75% of the time. | 44        | 73.3%   |

Table 22

*Store Manager Survey: Put in order the steps you use in your screening process.*

| Item                  | Order           |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                       | 1 <sup>st</sup> | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 4 <sup>th</sup> | 5 <sup>th</sup> | 6 <sup>th</sup> | 7 <sup>th</sup> | 8 <sup>th</sup> |
| Give Application      | 52 (87%)        | 7 (12%)         | 1 (2%)          | --              | --              | --              | --              | --              |
| Interview             | 2 (3%)          | 44 (73%)        | 6 (10%)         | 7 (12%)         | 1 (2%)          | --              | --              | --              |
| Orion Systems Survey  | --              | 2 (3%)          | 44 (73%)        | 6 (10%)         | 8 (13%)         | --              | --              | --              |
| Background Check      | 2 (3%)          | 1 (2%)          | 4 (7%)          | 30 (50%)        | 6 (10%)         | 8 (13%)         | 2 (3%)          | 1 (2%)          |
| Follow-up Interview   | 1 (2%)          | --              | --              | 2 (3%)          | 18 (30%)        | 15 (25%)        | 17 (28%)        | 2 (3%)          |
| Reference Check       | --              | 4 (7%)          | 1 (2%)          | 5 (8%)          | 10 (17%)        | 10 (17%)        | 7 (12%)         | 2 (3%)          |
| Past Employment Check | --              | 1 (2%)          | 4 (7%)          | 12 (20%)        | 13 (22%)        | 6 (10%)         | 5 (8%)          | 1 (2%)          |
| Offer Applicant Job   | 3 (5%)          | 2 (2%)          | --              | --              | 3 (5%)          | 16 (27%)        | 10 (17%)        | 24 (40%)        |

Table 23

*Store Manager Survey: Which items do you consistently use during training?*

| Item   | Yes      | No       |
|--|----------|----------|
| How to use register.                         | 56 (93%) | 4 (7%)   |
| Give store tour.                             | 56 (95%) | 3 (5%)   |
| Explain procedures for missing work.         | 51 (86%) | 8 (13%)  |
| Introduce to other employees.                | 55 (93%) | 4 (7%)   |
| Explain work expectations.                   | 58 (98%) | 1 (2%)   |
| Quiz and quest.                              | 9 (15%)  | 50 (85%) |
| Explain importance of customer service.      | 57 (97%) | 2 (3%)   |
| Review policies from employee handbook.      | 45 (76%) | 14 (24%) |
| Provide name tag and explain uniform policy. | 58 (98%) | 1 (2%)   |
| Discuss/review new hire packet.              | 57 (97%) | 2 (3%)   |

No Response=4

Table 24

*Store Manager Survey: Who is your District Manager?*

| Response      | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------|-----------|---------|
| Tom Benson    | 13        | 21.7%   |
| David Miller  | 10        | 16.7%   |
| Jen O'Neill   | 13        | 21.7%   |
| Pat Shea      | 11        | 18.3%   |
| Irene Zinniel | 12        | 20.0%   |

No Response=1

Table 25

*Sales Associate Interview Main Theme: Support*

| Sub-Theme (N)                             | Response  |
|---|---|
| <p>Training Support<br/>(23)</p>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Like he pretty much just sat there and coached me through it and if I wasn't sure on what to do or, what to press he'd show me it. Or show me again. So we always had somebody there that knew what they were doing to show us what to do. Or show me what to do rather.</li> <li>● I would say the most helpful was when I got myself stuck and I went and got (the store manager) and he pulled me aside and he ahh we apologized to the customers and he showed me slowly how to get myself out of the situation that I was in on the till.</li> <li>● The best part of the training...having someone standing there while I was learning the computer, learning the register and not really breathing down my neck. Because sometimes when you are learning things you wanna have a little bit of space, but not too much. You want someone kind of around, but not watching you and seeing what you are doing. So the fact that they are there, but not right there.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Positive Training<br/>Aspects (17)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Every day is just, ever since that I got done training I know that this is the standard and all I can do is either achieve them or exceed them.</li> <li>● ...I had a problem or something, I could call them (store manager) at home and then they'd would walk me</li> </ul>   |

| Sub-Theme (N)   | Response   |
|---|--|
| <p data-bbox="478 266 709 298">through the steps.</p> <p data-bbox="184 634 453 743">Co-worker Attitudes<br/>(12)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="478 337 1556 370">● ...he gave us little cheat sheets to work the register or anything that we need to do.</li> <li data-bbox="478 412 1902 597">● ...he (assistant manager) wanted to work with me one night to go over a few things that he thinks some of the associates may have forgotten simply cus it's out of second nature to them and he wanted to make sure I knew everything before I worked one night on my own.</li> <li data-bbox="478 634 1902 820">● ...the attitudes of everyone, was...people being...um (pause) helping with a smile rather than acting like they are...I think the attitude is the whole thing, everyone here seems to have a good attitude, everyone here doesn't seem crabby to be here and helping people. It is not really, it's a helping tool.</li> <li data-bbox="478 857 1902 1110">● The co-workers attitudes and everything, they had such good attitudes. I mean when you come into a place where the co-workers have bad attitudes you don't even care to be at work, try and even learn how to...and if you have other employees, co-workers with bad attitudes you don't even want to come to work and I had co-workers with good attitudes.</li> <li data-bbox="478 1149 1902 1331">● I mean it was great, people were really nice. I'm used to, I'm normally really nervous starting at a new place because you have to meet new people and new employees. My first day my stomach was just turning, I was nervous, I get like that, and the people were really nice. Like the trainer, she was really nice, and people I work</li> </ul> |

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| Sub-Theme (N)        | Response   |
|----------------------|--|
| Pace of Training (6) | <p data-bbox="480 266 1898 375">with I thought, I don't know, I thought I was gonna be really uncomfortable meeting new people. You know they could have been snotty, but they really made me feel comfortable that first day, it was great.</p> <ul data-bbox="480 412 1898 818" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="480 412 1898 597">● They let me work at my own pace so I wouldn't, like, overdue it or anything and do stuff half-ass. They just let me take my time, make sure I did it the first time correctly. Showed me the standard, I met it, and then they just gave me patience on making sure like, I actually had time to actually, like, remember everything.</li><li data-bbox="480 634 1898 743">● I think just like how they slowly did it, took their time and made sure I was ready before they actually made me independent on the register.</li><li data-bbox="480 781 1373 818">● ... she took it really slow, and she showed me how to do it properly.</li></ul> |

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Table 26

*Sales Associate Interview Main Theme: Opportunities for Improvement*

| Sub-Theme (N)                             | Response  |
|---|---|
| Training<br>Specifics/Suggestions<br>(27) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●...if something on your slip doesn't add up there's usually a really easy way to find out the obvious mistake, but since I haven't been here long enough I can't see the obvious mistake so a way that more explanation on how they figured out the obvious would be helpful.</li> <li>●...there's credit cards and then there's like the gas club cards or whatever- Or something like that, and those I had no clue how to do those at first, when I, I didn't know what they were when someone handed it to me.</li> <li>●...the paperwork is so confusing to me because it's the first time that I've worked in a gas station. And I kinda wish that there was a little more one on one with it, but with talking with the other employees and watching... how they do their paperwork...I kinda wish that I was...supervised a little bit more on that...</li> <li>●I think I would have explained more of what goes under what and stuff like that. Like what's taxable and what's not and kinda stuff like that, which is grocery and what's everything else.</li> </ul> |
| Longer/More<br>Training (9)               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●...I would add more time. Training needs to be done, I would say for this, not that I'm not smart almighty or anything, but probably 2-3 days of training with another person.</li> <li>●Maybe more hours... a lot covered in a little amount of time...</li> </ul>   |

| Sub-Theme (N)      | Response   |
|--------------------|--|
| Trainer Issues (7) | <p>● Try to give a person a little longer to get to know everything in the store before they put them on by themselves. I'm asking for more training actually.</p> <p>● ...so I went up and started doing on the till and the lady that was supposed to be helping me would just kinda wonder off for a long time. I don't know where, she would go outside and she would talk to people and I don't know it was kinda weird. So I really had to figure things out by myself and it was kinda stressful. You know wonder off for a long time. I don't know where, she would go outside and she would talk to people and I don't know it was kinda weird. So I really had to figure things out by myself and it was kinda stressful. You know what I mean, it's kinda like being thrown in a boat or canoe in the middle of the ocean and it's kinda stressful.</p> <p>● ...the stuff they taught me, like, they'd teach me shortcuts, you know, and stuff like that, but, like, the, umm, like the other stuff that I would have to do, like, either people didn't know how to do it or, like, I'd do it one way that the people would, my coworkers were telling me how to do it and then the management would come in and be like, that's not really how you do it." So we'd have to do, like, all this other stuff, and, I don't know, but it was kinda confusing sometimes...</p> <p>● I think it's good to be trained in with the manager, store manager, and then the day shift people that are here. Because they are very consistent on their training. Rather than, hearing, you know, when it comes to one</p> |

| Sub-Theme (N)                         | Response   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| More Convenient<br>Training Times (5) | <p>subject- five different ways to do it. You know, I think that it confuses people in the training process so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●...I just came in and who ever was working helped me with what ever I needed to know, and I worked with... three of the people that worked closing, so I got closing shifts mostly.</li> <li>●The girl who trained me didn't exactly care too much about her job so I wasn't exactly showed how to do things... properly you could say.</li> <li>●...if I had a question on someone who was doing something else it was, you know took a while to get an answer and then the customers were always kinda, you know, upset about that then I'd feel bad...</li> <li>●I wish it was less busy that day (of training)...it was during the weekday so it was pretty busy so it was kinda hard to help a new person and get everyone, all the customers taken care of and everything...</li> <li>●...a slower time in the day would be a easier to show people how to do it. Cause when its busy, you know, they move kind of fast, and you cant really comprehend everything. But maybe at like a slow time in the day it would be better to train people in.</li> </ul> |

Table 27

*Sales Associate Interview Main Theme: What is Actually Occurring during Training*

| Sub-Theme (N)   | Responses   |
|---|---|
| Training Process:<br>Explained,<br>Observed, Tried (24) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I went out the front and just observed the ... other two... workers that were here that day just to watch them ring up and stuff ... because I only had a short first shift and then they had me ring up a couple and ... if I had any questions about anything...</li> <li>● ...I pretty much just kind of watched while she showed me... then she kind of just ... let me do a little bit...</li> <li>● Showed me the till and showed me where everything was and things like that. Then they teached me how to run the till.</li> <li>● They showed me how, they explained it, and then they just had me try it.</li> </ul> |
| Sufficient Training<br>(15)                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I don't think I'd change anything. I'm very confident and very proud how I was trained. I have very good co-workers and (the Store Manager) did a great job on training me and so did (the assistant manager). And they were there for me every step of the way.</li> <li>● I wouldn't change anything... I mean I feel comfortable, I feel comfortable doing anything.</li> <li>● ...I don't think I would change anything. It went really, really well and I picked up really quick, and... I mean I didn't... I barely had any questions my second day at all. Probably because I've been coming in here</li> </ul>         |

| Sub-Theme (N)                | Responses   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Trained by Co-workers (15)   | <p data-bbox="489 267 1791 375">for a year and a half before I started working here, so I am very comfortable with the people that I was working with. And I've been in... I've been in customer service for 10 years...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="489 414 1896 597">●(the Store Manager) was busy at first so I was up there with (a co-worker) and then he took me around the store, and I went back up there...(the Store Manager) was on his way out, so there was me, and Melissa, and I think (pause) Missy, so there were three of us. Mostly (a co-worker), because she is the assistant.</li> <li data-bbox="489 638 1896 745">●I was scheduled with a girl who's been here for about a year and she showed me how to run the registers and ring customers up and do the job duties for the store.</li> <li data-bbox="489 786 1818 818">●...I was trained in by another employee. It was very thorough training. He was a very thorough person.</li> <li data-bbox="489 859 1885 891">●...it was actually a variety of people (training me), I know that Clay had trained me in, Al,...as well as Tim.</li> </ul> |
| Trained by Store Manager (7) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="489 932 1283 964">●The training that I received, it was...given by my manager...</li> <li data-bbox="489 1005 1902 1188">●Well, (the Store Manager) just showed me pretty much the ins and outs of the store and where everything is. And then kinda just stood next to me. They rang people up while I watched and then let me do it and let me ask questions and stuff like that.</li> <li data-bbox="489 1229 1902 1333">●It was mostly the manager, or the assistant manager. Or otherwise if they were busy or if they were talking to somebody or something then...another associate would help me.</li> </ul>  |

Table 28

*Sales Associate Interview Main Theme: Training Inconsistencies*

| Sub-Theme (N)                  | Responses   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Lunch and Break Schedules (15) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●...as far as I know there's...the break is when the store is empty and everything's done you can take a little smoke break, keep an eye on the store, a customer comes you go in and you automatically take care of them. As far as the lunch break, it would be about the same thing. You just do eat in the count...at the counter and the customer comes in you automatically put the food down and you go ahead and take care of the customer.</li> <li>●We don't have 'em (breaks).</li> <li>●...basically the breaks are just if you are working 8 hours you get like two fifteen minute breaks and a half an hour break.</li> <li>●We go about every two hours and take like a 10 minute break.</li> </ul> |
| Training Time Length (10)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●...I came in for I think 4 or 5 shifts of training...</li> <li>●...I had 3 days of training...and once I got to my third day, I was perfectly fine.</li> <li>●Well, I only had one night of training, and it was pretty brief...</li> <li>●...(I was trained) maybe 3 or 4 days...</li> </ul>   |

| Sub-Theme (N)                      | Responses  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Dress Code (9)                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●...pretty much jeans and the vest and a nicer shirt over a hoodie or something.</li> <li>●...a solid colored, umm, T shirt that's collared. With tucked into either, umm, khaki, black, or umm, blue, like dress pants. Not like jeans, but pants.</li> <li>●Well you gotta wear your smock and your name tag.</li> <li>●...Tennis shoes... no open toe, and you can basically wear jeans and t-shirts. As long as you're not... smelling or anything.</li> <li>●...jeans that don't have holes in 'em, and shirts that don't have holes in them...and no bad language, drugs, alcohol...</li> </ul> |
| Procedures for Calling in Sick (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Umm...I presume you just...I wasn't told any specific procedures but I presume you just call in... and inform them as soon umm as possible.</li> <li>● Umm... I'm guessing... before your shift at least two... two to three hours before your shift.</li> <li>● No I haven't called in sick yet. Do you just call the manager or the assistant manager and... the day before or two hours before or something like that?</li> </ul>  |

Table 29

*Sales Associate Interviews: Training Checklist Part I – Do you know the...*

| Item                                    | Responses   |                                   |                             |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | Don't Know. | Familiar, but<br>would need help. | Could explain<br>right now. |
| Lunch and break schedules               | 9 (33.3%)   | --                                | 18 (66.7%)                  |
| Dress code regulations                  | 1 (3.7%)    | 7 (25.9%)                         | 19 (70.4%)                  |
| Work and performance review schedule    | 16 (59.3%)  | 3 (11.1%)                         | 8 (29.6%)                   |
| Daily duty list                         | --          | --                                | 27 (100%)                   |
| Procedures for calling in sick          | 2 (7.4%)    | 7 (25.9%)                         | 18 (66.7%)                  |
| Requests for time off, how it's handled | 1 (3.7%)    | --                                | 26 (96.3%)                  |
| Clocking in and out                     | --          | --                                | 27 (100%)                   |
| Receive phone numbers, where to post    | 2 (7.4%)    | 1 (3.7%)                          | 24 (88.9%)                  |
| How holiday schedules are handled       | 15 (55.6%)  | 3 (11.1%)                         | 9 (33.3%)                   |
| Employee parking, vendor parking        | 4 (14.8%)   | 1 (3.7%)                          | 22 (81.5%)                  |
| Smoking area and policy                 | 2 (7.4%)    | --                                | 25 (92.6%)                  |
| Employee purchases                      | --          | 1 (3.7%)                          | 26 (96.3%)                  |
| Phone use                               | 1 (3.7%)    | 1 (3.7%)                          | 25 (92.6%)                  |
| Employee theft                          | 2 (7.4%)    | --                                | 25 (92.6%)                  |

Table 30

*Sales Associate Interviews: Interview Checklist Part II - During orientation, were you...*

| Item                              | Responses  |           |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------|
|                                   | Yes        | No        |
| Given store tour                  | 25 (92.6%) | 2 (7.4%)  |
| Introduced to crew and management | 25 (92.6%) | 2 (7.4%)  |
| Given new hire packet             | 26 (96.3%) | 1 (3.7%)  |
| Complete insurance packet         | 20 (74.1%) | 7 (25.9%) |

Table 32

*Exit Interview: What did you like most about the job?*

| Theme (N)                 | Survey Comments  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Customers (63)            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Customers. I love working in a gas station/convenience store. I have met many wonderful people working in them.</li> <li>•I love the customers, and relating to them. Many of them came in because they knew I was working and liked to chat with me.</li> <li>•I liked helping customers and talking with some on a first name basis.</li> <li>•I felt like I was a huge asset to my employer. I knew all the customers by their first names- so well in fact that I received cards/gifts showing their appreciation.</li> <li>•Dealing with the customers and forming great friendships with a lot of them.</li> </ul> |
| Co-workers and Staff (41) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Personnel - great staff. Very Organized.</li> <li>•The staff was friendly, and the job was fairly enjoyable.</li> <li>•Fun, easy-going, causal atmosphere, easy to get along with co-workers.</li> <li>•The people I worked with.</li> <li>•Almost all of it, but the greatest thing was my boss.</li> </ul>   |

| Theme (N)           | Survey Comments   |
|---------------------|---|
| Job in General (26) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The work atmosphere and the co-workers were great! My manager was understanding, flexible to the schedule; it is not often you find a manager like that.</li> <li>•The manager and co-workers were great! I left because I was done with school and started a new career.</li> <li>•Easy Job!</li> <li>•I liked my job all around.</li> <li>•The job was really fun and the time went by really fast when I was at work. The atmosphere was laid back and I thoroughly enjoyed my co workers.</li> <li>•The freedom to dictate what work needed to be done and when it got done.</li> <li>•There was always something to keep us busy, not just cleaning</li> <li>•The pace of work.</li> </ul> |
| Nothing (7)         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•None.</li> <li>•I didn't like anything about it.</li> <li>•Leaving.</li> <li>•Nothing, I hated it.</li> </ul>   |
| No Response=3       |   |

Table 33

*Exit Interview: What did you like least about the job?*

| Theme (N)                   | Survey Comments   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Managers: General<br>(16)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Management.</li> <li>•The Manager.</li> <li>•I suppose sometimes not feeling appreciated by the company in general. I have worked there since 1996 and the benefits have become less and less through out the years.</li> </ul>   |
| Managers: Behavior<br>(12)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Store Manager and her rudeness. She seemed determined to make customers angry and employees feel like they know nothing. I felt extremely threatened by her and how she treated others.</li> <li>•The new manager. He was always saying inappropriate things to me, customers, and other employees.</li> <li>•Things were said by the manager to be done and changed but never happened.</li> </ul>             |
| Managers:<br>Favoritism (7) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Assistant manager was very demanding towards me. She always talked bad about me to the other employees and the Manager. It made work uncomfortable and unpleasant.</li> <li>•The managers and hours that I was getting (very few and none at times) The manager had "special" employees.</li> <li>•Lack of consistency in manager. Okay one time, not okay another. Employee favoritism and customer</li> </ul> |

| Theme (N)                    | Survey Comments   |
|------------------------------|---|
| favoritism.                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The manager used favoritism, and treated me like crap.</li> </ul>   |
| Job Responsibilities<br>(17) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Coffee set-up, prep and cleaning.</li> <li>•Store cleaning, but that's just part of the job.</li> <li>•I noticed changes in the daily routine. I was working so often that I was being shown no appreciation. I started to feel in competition with my co-workers. It was no longer fun to go to work everyday.</li> <li>•Book work.</li> <li>•Stocking tanks at night.</li> <li>•Mopping and sweeping.</li> <li>•Changing the gas sign and no breaks.</li> </ul> |
| Scheduling (13)              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Always working until close. Never got weekend day shifts.</li> <li>•Being called into a shift in which I was not scheduled to work.</li> <li>•Not set hours every week, but you can't really do that can you?</li> <li>•Too many hours during the weekend none during the week.</li> </ul>  |

| Theme (N)                    | Survey Comments  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Co-workers/Customers<br>(12) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•I never got enough hours, I was promised 35-40 and only got 12- 25 a week.</li> <li>•Certain co-workers.</li> <li>•Some customers. Mainly not enough to do.</li> <li>•When the shift before mine did not do their expected duties.</li> <li>•Some of the other employees were very lazy and didn't pull their own weight. And not enough hours given.</li> <li>•The complaints from customers about old gas handles and pumps. Either people couldn't see them well or they didn't clock off when they were supposed to.</li> <li>•Being called into work when someone else was sick or unable to cover their shift. Having to finish duties that should have been done before I got there.</li> <li>•The people on the shift before me did not always do their job so I normally had to do my list plus the things they were too lazy to do.</li> </ul> |
| Long Hours, No Breaks (7)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•I didn't like not having a lunch/dinner break, I know it gets real busy but a 30 min. break would have been nice.</li> <li>•Long hours on feet.</li> <li>•That we couldn't sit down not even for 5 minutes or we would get yelled at.</li> </ul>   |

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| Theme (N)    | Survey Comments  |
|--------------|--|
| Pay (5)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The pay was not enough to support a family.</li><li>•My pay and new changes.</li><li>•The pay- too low.</li></ul> |
| Not Enough   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Always having to train a new manager every couple of months.</li></ul>  |
| Training (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•I was not trained in properly so there were some things I was unsure of.</li><li>•Hardly any training.</li></ul>  |

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No Response=11

Table 34

*Exit Interview: Reasons for Leaving*

| Theme (N)  | Survey Comments  |
|--|--|
| Store Manager:<br>Favoritism,<br>Employee<br>Treatment,<br>Disrespect (27) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Manager, on more than one occasion, would talk to one of my friends about me, one of the times she was at a bar, drinking, asking personal questions about me. Manager would not let me use my employee gas discount card on a gas purchase for a vehicle I had been driving for a month.</li> <li>●The biggest reason I quit was because of how the assistant manager and the manager did business. There was never a schedule made up and I always had to go in and see if I had to work or not. Also, the employees have a problem about talking about and complaining about other employees to employees and outside people.</li> <li>●Management put you down in front of customers.</li> <li>●Not feeling comfortable in my work environment.</li> <li>●She says that the reason why I had to leave was nothing personal but I believe it was because she played favoritism.</li> <li>●I never got my 6 month review as my manager promised. Store Manager treated me with disrespect. Before she came back from medical leave I loved my job. But with her back, I dreaded work.</li> </ul> |

| Theme (N)        | Survey Comments  |
|------------------|--|
| Store Manager:   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The Manager.</li> </ul>  |
| General (6)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•After shopping at the Baldwin store for 25 years I became friends with the various employees. This was my reason for volunteering to work part-time after retirement. Once the manager was fired and (co-worker) quit, the job went downhill.</li> <li>•Conflicts with my manager, I was not making enough to support my family, I was losing my drive under certain conditions.</li> </ul>  |
| Scheduling/Hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Working all weekends, Holidays, and 8pm-11pm - not enough hours.</li> </ul>  |
| (16)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The biggest reason I quit was because of how the assistant manager and the manager did business. There was never a schedule made up and I always had to go in and see if I had to work or not. There were many instances when I would go in to see if I worked that day, or even the next day, and they would tell me I wasn't working. I would later find out that they had called one of the other employees to come in and take over the time I should've worked. They cut my hours back dramatically and it came to the point that there was no sense in me even working there, since they had me working one day a week if that.</li> <li>•Fewer and fewer hours each week and way overstaffed at times. I was not scheduled for two weeks in a row.</li> <li>•I was burnt out; Store Manager kept scheduling me for only weekends. Sometimes I would work 3-4</li> </ul> |

| Theme (N)                    | Survey Comments   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Conflict W/School<br>(13)    | <p>weekends in a row and when I finally had a weekend off, Store Manager would call me and ask me to come in.<br/>As a result of this my job performance suffered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Interfered with school work and too much responsibility for me to handle at one time, it just wasn't the right time in my life to be in that position.</li> <li>•I couldn't get more hours per week without it interfering with school.</li> <li>•I left for an internship for college.</li> </ul> |
| Accepted Another<br>Job (13) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Found a better job.</li> <li>•Offered a different job.</li> </ul>   |
| Low Pay (12)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•I have worked there for over 3 years and people who just started are making more money than me.</li> <li>•Conflicts with my manager, I was not making enough to support my family; I was losing my drive under certain conditions.</li> <li>•Didn't receive a raise after 11 months, manager caught lying many times.</li> <li>•No three month review for a raise. Too much arguing between co workers. Management put you down in front of customers.</li> </ul>         |

| Theme (N)                    | Survey Comments   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Moved (12)                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Moved out of state.</li> <li>●Moved 1350 miles away.</li> </ul>   |
| Health/Family Issues<br>(11) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I was getting medical help and some of the staff liked to start rumors.</li> <li>●Pregnancy.</li> <li>●My fiancé is very sick and I was taking care of him a lot plus another full time job so I got burned out.</li> <li>●Too much in my life going on right now. A 2 year old and nine month old, full time college and another job that gave benefits to my children.</li> </ul> |
| Fired/Retired (7)            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I was terminated.</li> <li>●Retirement.</li> </ul>  |
| Part-time/Seasonal           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Just needed a part-time job over the winter. Then we moved 20 miles away.</li> </ul>  |
| Employment (6)               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●I was planning on coming back over summer break but the manager that promised me my job back left over the summer and I was not called back after letting the store know I was available for work.</li> <li>●Did not need the extra income anymore.</li> <li>●Part-time.</li> </ul>   |

| Theme (N)                 | Survey Comments   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Conflict W/Co-workers (6) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Also, the employees have a problem about talking about and complaining about other employees to employees and outside people.</li> <li>•Too many duties to do while waiting on customers. I worked hard at them but other employees didn't so it game me extra work all the time.</li> <li>•Tired of people called for stupid things (toilet clogged, paper jam). Tired of DM that wouldn't do anything and only seeing him once every 2 weeks, if that.</li> </ul> |
| Conflict W/Other Job (5)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Time- I have always had another full time job aside from working at Company ABC. I needed to have somewhat of a life instead of working all the time.</li> <li>•I had too many jobs at that time and my others paid more.</li> <li>•I have another job, too much for me.</li> </ul>   |
| No Response=1             |   |

Table 35

*Exit Interview: Are there any issues you would like to bring to our attention?*

| Theme (N)                                  | Survey Comments   |
|--|---|
| No Issues – Praises<br>for Co-workers (50) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No, I loved working at Company ABC, my coworkers and boss was awesome!</li> <li>● No, the store is well run.</li> <li>● No, everyone was terrific. Especially the DM and the manager.</li> </ul>   |
| Store Manager –<br>Negative (38)           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● (store manager) has many people who don't like him and many people who won't come to the store because of him.</li> <li>● She (store manager) is selling her side line jobs from the station. People that know I worked there miss me; I will not go back because she is not friendly.</li> <li>● Yes, the manager would take things off the shelf for his own personal use and not pay for them.</li> <li>● The incidents of store managers dating employees and giving them special privileges over others.</li> <li>● Scheduling, Cash shortages. (store manager) threatened to take any cash shortages out of our checks.</li> </ul> |
| Respect for<br>Employees (17)              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Take care of your employees, they are the ones that sell your products, if they are happy, they will sell Company ABC products.</li> <li>● I retired after 36 years with a large company. I was middle management for over 15 years. To have a</li> </ul>  |

| Theme (N)          | Survey Comments   |
|--------------------|---|
|                    | <p>twenty year old come into the store as new manager and tell me how to work and how to treat people was completely demeaning and embarrassing!</p>  |
|                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employees need to be more appreciated for work they do, everything done wrong was made sure to be brought to our attention. Things done right went unmentioned.</li> </ul>   |
| Wages (6)          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ...pay your people better it will make you more money in the long run.</li> <li>● Pay a little more money to attract desirable workers.</li> </ul>   |
| Physical Store     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Store needs a lot of updates to equipment as well as repairs to store.</li> </ul>  |
| Improvement (5)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Company ABC (store) I worked at could have been a lot cleaner, and better organized.</li> <li>● I realize at this point in time budget is tight even so preventative maintenance is a must! Our car wash broke down several times.</li> </ul>                                  |
| Random Issues (13) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● My issue is have two people working together, it is kind of scary to work by yourself.</li> <li>● "long time employees" know it all but don't politely tell you what's up, but rudely do it.</li> <li>● I wanted to take family medical leave and was told I could not.</li> </ul> |

Table 36

*Exit Interviews: Do you have any recommendations to make Company ABC a better place to work?*

| Theme (N)          | Survey Comments  |
|--------------------|--|
| No Answer/Good     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I loved working there, it was a great job.</li> </ul>   |
| Place To Work (34) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nothing, it was a good place to work.</li> <li>● Nothing, actually I loved my job and honestly miss the people as well as my co-workers.</li> </ul>   |
| Management:        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Utilize experience of employees, don't treat them like children.</li> </ul>   |
| General            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● More structure in the dividing of shift duties. More structure in management and authority.</li> </ul>  |
| Recommendations    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make sure to treat the "little people" respectfully as equals as a person, reward them more often.</li> </ul>   |
| (15)               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make it fun.</li> <li>● When in a relationship, employees can't work together!</li> </ul>   |
| Management: Need   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Find new responsible management.</li> </ul>   |
| for New (12)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I really believe a new manager would be the problem solver. Someone who really cares about the employees and customers.</li> <li>● I would fire (store manager), there are many past employees at this (store) that would agree with me on that issue.</li> </ul> |

- Management: • Train managers to be compassionate and not to discriminate.
- Training (7) • Thoroughly exam you new managers on how they will run their store!!
- A better manager training program that would start with assistant managers being salaried and bonuses as well. So that they can develop a little more sense of self responsibility in their store and how it performs.
- Management: • I would recommend that you look at the qualifications of the Managers and Assistant Managers a little better before hiring them.
- Selection (5) • When you hire a manager make sure she is nice and willing to work with you!
- Pay attention to who you hire for management.
- Management: • Make sure the DM spends time with the manager, also don't be afraid to look into an audit crew for
- Communication (5) shortages instead of employees
- More communications and reasoning from DM to employees.
- Physical Store • Newer equipment and floors need help!
- Recommendations • Have a bathroom located inside the store. Both for safety and convenience.
- (9) • Putting back items on the counter that are after thought buys. Like lighters and cashews, instead of weird pills. If people can't find them, they won't buy them.

- Wages (9)
- Better pay.
  - Equal starting rate, no reason for a difference.
  - Higher wages.
- Benefits/Gas/Food (9)
- Increase benefits or find ways to make sure the good, hardworking employees feel appreciated.
  - Better discount on gas. The employees get the same discount that the customers get
  - Give your employees a reward of some kind to show them appreciation for their work.
- Always Have Two People On Shifts (6)
- 2 people on at ALL times.
  - At least 2 people working per shift. Sometimes there was only 1 person working for 8hrs. It was kind of hard to get everything done.
  - Maybe having 2 people work same shifts, instead of just one.
- Scheduling (4)
- Make sure the store has a minimum number of people and all get the same amount of hours. Have surveys taken.
  - Vary the schedule instead of all closings and every weekend.
- Employee Training (4)
- More training
  - The training was horrible.
-

Table 39

*Exit Interview: Could Termination Have Been Prevented?*

| Theme (N)          | Survey Comments   |
|--------------------|---|
| Store Manager (22) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The manager and assistant manager need to learn a little more about managing.</li> <li>● The new manager could have informed everyone of his plan. The people he has hired are not pleasing to current customers and are leaving Company ABC.</li> <li>● If (store manager) had done a 3 month review with me I would have known what to improve on. Everyone got a review but me.</li> <li>● Management needs to show more respect to their employees, including store managers.</li> <li>● Management with more knowledge and company moral.</li> <li>● I could have been called back to work after letting the person in charge know I was back, at least something saying they didn't need me.</li> <li>● She could have told me what I was doing wrong instead of terminating me, I really enjoyed my job.</li> </ul> |
| Better Pay (11)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Higher pay!</li> <li>● Pay me a lot more.</li> </ul>   |

| Theme (N)         | Survey Comments  |
|-------------------|--|
| Hours (10)        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A fat pay check.</li> <li>● Pay raise.</li> <li>● By giving reasons why I had no more hours and talk to employees more.</li> <li>● Yes, but there is no way you would be able to pay me the amount and give me 60 hours a week like the construction does over the summer.</li> <li>● Give me hours if I asked for more like I did.</li> <li>● If they would have not cut my pay and my hours all because I got sick is wrong.</li> <li>● Give me the hours I was promised when I started.</li> </ul> |
| Given Respect (8) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If apologized to.</li> <li>● To be respected as a valued employee that valued my job very much.</li> <li>● Management needs to show more respect to their employees, including store managers.</li> <li>● If I had been shown a little more appreciation, paid a little more, or if my co-workers behaved a little differently.</li> <li>● More training and respect.</li> <li>● I was treated like dirt and threatened withholding my check.</li> </ul>  |

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| Theme (N)                             | Survey Comments  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| No Opportunity For<br>Advancement (4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Given the opportunity for advancement.</li><li>● An opportunity to manage my own store.</li><li>● If there were Company ABCs where I go to school I would have applied.</li><li>● I feel like I couldn't make a career out of it. It was one of my most favorable jobs though. I enjoyed the people.</li></ul> |

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Nothing could be done=54; Yes, no suggestions=9; Uncontrollable (not being pregnant)=1; No Response=5

Table 41

*Current Employee Hourly Wages vs. NACS: Descriptive Statistics*

| Geographic District  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean   |
|----------------------|---------|---------|--------|
| NACS: Midwest        | \$5.90  | \$10.00 | \$6.86 |
| Company ABC: WI & MI | \$5.50  | \$11.25 | \$7.67 |
| NACS: Plains         | \$5.68  | \$10.74 | \$8.11 |
| Company ABC: SD & MN | \$5.90  | \$13.25 | \$7.76 |
| NACS: Total U.S.     | \$5.68  | \$12.11 | \$7.72 |
| Company ABC: Total   | \$5.50  | \$13.25 | \$7.74 |

NACS data gathered from: (NACS, 2005b)

Table 43

*Sales Associate Employee Termination Reason Since 2000: Descriptive Statistics*

| Termination Reason           | Number of<br>Employees | Number of Days Worked |      |      |     |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------|------|-----|
|                              |                        | Min                   | Max  | Mean | SD  |
| Abandoned job                | 725                    | 0                     | 2783 | 158  | 301 |
| Accepted another job         | 514                    | 0                     | 3093 | 391  | 529 |
| Unknown/no code              | 379                    | 0                     | 5553 | 269  | 486 |
| Moved                        | 266                    | 0                     | 3898 | 435  | 569 |
| Walked off job               | 229                    | 0                     | 2444 | 231  | 355 |
| Personal/family issues       | 210                    | 0                     | 6464 | 412  | 740 |
| Violation of Co. policies    | 144                    | 0                     | 3230 | 341  | 629 |
| Conflict w/other job         | 91                     | 0                     | 2369 | 263  | 449 |
| Unacceptable work            | 76                     | 1                     | 2363 | 213  | 397 |
| Careless money handling      | 74                     | 5                     | 2725 | 204  | 411 |
| Suspicion of theft           | 72                     | 5                     | 800  | 178  | 199 |
| Didn't return from LOA       | 72                     | 1                     | 2778 | 591  | 673 |
| Excessive shortages          | 70                     | 2                     | 2577 | 235  | 425 |
| Quit                         | 70                     | 0                     | 3076 | 406  | 593 |
| Conflict w/school            | 64                     | 0                     | 1784 | 297  | 374 |
| Excessive absences/tardiness | 63                     | 1                     | 625  | 106  | 130 |
| Charged w/theft              | 56                     | 1                     | 1150 | 229  | 279 |
| Insubordination              | 43                     | 0                     | 1629 | 242  | 342 |
| Dishonesty                   | 41                     | 5                     | 2142 | 218  | 437 |

| Termination Reason       | Number of<br>Employees | <u>Number of Days Worked</u> |       |      |      |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------|------|------|
|                          |                        | Min                          | Max   | Mean | SD   |
| Conflict w/co-workers    | 34                     | 5                            | 2188  | 281  | 433  |
| Restricted availability  | 31                     | 0                            | 1485  | 272  | 395  |
| Store closed             | 26                     | 21                           | 2060  | 588  | 633  |
| Transportation problems  | 13                     | 2                            | 274   | 94   | 78   |
| Maternity                | 13                     | 19                           | 1277  | 186  | 331  |
| Position eliminated      | 11                     | 0                            | 806   | 176  | 264  |
| Conflict w/childcare     | 11                     | 0                            | 659   | 190  | 207  |
| Entered military         | 10                     | 27                           | 852   | 269  | 271  |
| Falsified records        | 10                     | 1                            | 1218  | 261  | 417  |
| Reduction in force       | 6                      | 63                           | 388   | 161  | 123  |
| Retired                  | 4                      | 261                          | 11444 | 3919 | 5143 |
| Never started work       | 4                      | 0                            | 2     | .5   | 1    |
| Destruction of property  | 2                      | 30                           | 159   | 95   | 91   |
| Transfer to new Co. code | 2                      | 134                          | 326   | 230  | 136  |

SD=Standard Deviation; Outliers have been removed; Mean=Average; N=3455

Table 45

## Individual Store Turnover Rates 2001-2005

| Store Number | Turnover Rate by Year |      |      |      |      | Avg. Turnover Rate 2001-2005 |
|--------------|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------------------------------|
|              | 2001                  | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |                              |
| 1            | 75%                   | 100% | 100% | 50%  | 100% | 85%                          |
| 3            | 150%                  | 100% | --   | 200% | 167% | 123%                         |
| 4            | 257%                  | --   | --   | --   | --   | 257%                         |
| 5            | 55%                   | 73%  | 150% | 233% | 86%  | 119%                         |
| 8            | 191%                  | 100% | 138% | 67%  | 56%  | 110%                         |
| 9            | 133%                  | 125% | 160% | 160% | 267% | 169%                         |
| 13           | 50%                   | 100% | 150% | 125% | --   | 85%                          |
| 14           | 200%                  | 160% | 160% | 250% | 300% | 214%                         |
| 15           | 40%                   | 86%  | 56%  | 100% | 80%  | 72%                          |
| 16           | 83%                   | 43%  | 133% | 450% | 200% | 182%                         |
| 17           | 100%                  | 114% | 200% | 200% | 138% | 150%                         |
| 18           | 300%                  | 325% | 167% | 333% | 250% | 275%                         |

| Store Number | Turnover Rate by Year |      |      |      |      | Avg. Turnover Rate<br>2001-2005 |
|--------------|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------------|
|              | 2001                  | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |                                 |
| 19           | 71%                   | 275% | 175% | 400% | 400% | 264%                            |
| 20           | 43%                   | 140% | 40%  | 160% | 100% | 97%                             |
| 21           | 186%                  | 122% | 133% | 100% | 188% | 146%                            |
| 24           | 129%                  | 140% | 100% | 180% | 80%  | 126%                            |
| 25           | 60%                   | 29%  | 50%  | 38%  | 13%  | 38%                             |
| 26           | 1800%                 | 100% | 200% | 300% | 150% | 510%                            |
| 27           | 67%                   | 250% | --   | 100% | 125% | 108%                            |
| 29           | 100%                  | 113% | 157% | 86%  | 86%  | 108%                            |
| 30           | 283%                  | 189% | 122% | 122% | 91%  | 161%                            |
| 31           | 63%                   | 88%  | 300% | 220% | 100% | 154%                            |
| 32           | 83%                   | 100% | 60%  | 30%  | 33%  | 61%                             |
| 33           | 36%                   | 27%  | 14%  | 64%  | 14%  | 31%                             |
| 35           | 238%                  | 56%  | 55%  | 175% | 111% | 127%                            |
| 36           | 133%                  | 150% | 167% | 229% | 100% | 156%                            |

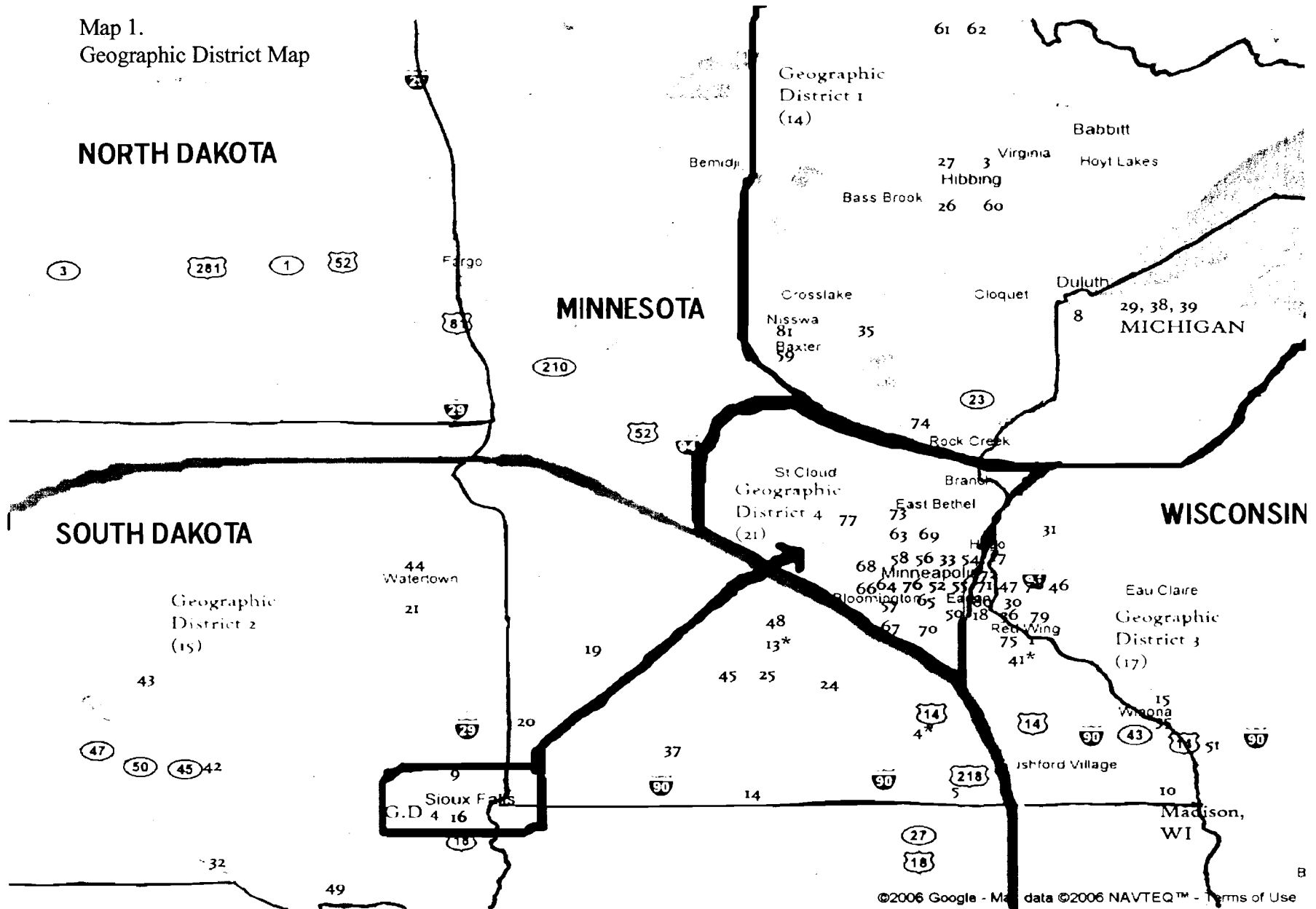
| Store Number | Turnover Rate by Year |      |      |      |      | Avg. Turnover Rate<br>2001-2005 |
|--------------|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------------|
|              | 2001                  | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |                                 |
| 37           | 220%                  | 167% | 143% | 150% | 229% | 182%                            |
| 38           | 75%                   | 167% | 33%  | 150% | 75%  | 100%                            |
| 39           | 120%                  | 133% | 150% | 100% | 33%  | 107%                            |
| 41           | 200%                  | 200% | 500% | --   | --   | 180%                            |
| 42           | 143%                  | 500% | 100% | 163% | 333% | 248%                            |
| 43           | 57%                   | 100% | 80%  | 50%  | 60%  | 69%                             |
| 44           | 60%                   | 200% | 100% | 300% | 250% | 182%                            |
| 45           | 110%                  | 55%  | 80%  | 89%  | 111% | 89%                             |
| 46           | 83%                   | 50%  | 220% | 129% | 200% | 136%                            |
| 47           | 133%                  | 113% | 129% | 111% | 108% | 119%                            |
| 48           | 100%                  | 67%  | 27%  | 89%  | 71%  | 71%                             |
| 49           | 14%                   | 63%  | 333% | 667% | 100% | 235%                            |
| 50           | 300%                  | 289% | 210% | 113% | 100% | 202%                            |
| 51           | 114%                  | 88%  | 63%  | 75%  | 75%  | 83%                             |

| Store Number | Turnover Rate by Year |      |      |      |      | Avg. Turnover Rate<br>2001-2005 |
|--------------|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------------|
|              | 2001                  | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |                                 |
| 52           | 133%                  | 125% | 113% | 191% | 177% | 148%                            |
| 53           | 280%                  | 225% | 43%  | 100% | 67%  | 143%                            |
| 54           | 500%                  | 280% | 833% | 100% | 80%  | 359%                            |
| 55           | 214%                  | 243% | 467% | 120% | 67%  | 222%                            |
| 56           | 250%                  | 250% | 160% | 200% | 157% | 203%                            |
| 57           | 371%                  | 180% | 50%  | 83%  | 275% | 192%                            |
| 58           | 250%                  | 200% | 158% | 222% | 77%  | 181%                            |
| 59           | 160%                  | 186% | 200% | 450% | 133% | 226%                            |
| 60           | 117%                  | 300% | 320% | 167% | 171% | 215%                            |
| 61           | --                    | 67%  | 200% | --   | 67%  | 67%                             |
| 62           | --                    | 100% | --   | 167% | 75%  | 68%                             |
| 63           | 113%                  | 140% | 113% | 100% | 113% | 116%                            |
| 64           | 240%                  | 57%  | 25%  | 83%  | 75%  | 96%                             |
| 65           | 325%                  | 200% | 55%  | 175% | 120% | 175%                            |

| Store Number | Turnover Rate by Year |      |      |      |      | Avg. Turnover Rate<br>2001-2005 |
|--------------|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------------|
|              | 2001                  | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |                                 |
| 66           | 191%                  | 343% | 150% | 229% | 271% | 237%                            |
| 67           | 100%                  | 300% | 133% | 225% | 200% | 192%                            |
| 68           | 100%                  | 133% | 150% | 108% | 153% | 129%                            |
| 69           | 189%                  | 280% | 125% | 33%  | 125% | 150%                            |
| 70           | 338%                  | 211% | 150% | 191% | 170% | 212%                            |
| 71           | --                    | --   | --   | 57%  | --   | 57%                             |
| 72           | --                    | --   | --   | 22%  | 33%  | 11%                             |
| 73           | --                    | --   | --   | 100% | 163% | 53%                             |
| 74           | --                    | --   | --   | 129% | 211% | 68%                             |
| 75           | --                    | --   | --   | 200% | 286% | 97%                             |
| 76           | --                    | --   | --   | 50%  | 111% | 32%                             |
| 77           | --                    | --   | --   | 88%  | 208% | 59%                             |
| 78           | --                    | --   | --   | 25%  | 111% | 27%                             |
| 80           | --                    | --   | --   | --   | 120% | 120%                            |

| Store<br>Number | Turnover Rate by Year |      |      |      |      | Avg. Turnover Rate<br>2001-2005 |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------------|
|                 | 2001                  | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |                                 |
| 81              | --                    | --   | --   | --   | 483% | 483%                            |

Map 1.  
Geographic District Map



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## Appendix A: Survey Instrument: Store Manager Survey

### Store Manager Survey

Please answer all questions honestly. All responses will remain anonymous and be reported as a whole. The data collected from this survey will be used to improve the use and processes of screening tools, training, and orientation so that the turnover of sales associate employees can be reduced.

1. After the Orion Survey has cleared a potential sales associate, how often do you do a background check?

A background check is conducted by calling HR with candidate's specific information in order to examine their criminal background.

- a. More than 75% of the time.
- b. 51-75% of the time.
- c. 25-50% of the time.
- d. Less than 25% of the time.
- e. I have never done a background check.
- f. My store is in SD or MI.

(if answer is a, skip question 2)

2. What are your reasons for not using background checks more often?

3. How useful to you are background checks in selecting the best sales associate employee?
  - a. Very Useful
  - b. Useful
  - c. Useless
  - d. Very Useless

4. Do you have any other comments regarding background checks? (ex. Questions, problems, suggestions)

5. After the Orion Survey has cleared a potential sales associate, how often do you do a reference check?

A reference check is conducted by calling the candidate's references listed on their application.

- a. More than 75% of the time.
- b. 51-75% of the time.
- c. 25-50% of the time.
- d. Less than 25% of the time.
- e. I have never done a reference check.

(if answer is a, skip question 6)

6. What are your reasons for not using reference checks more often?

7. How useful to you are reference checks in selecting the best sales associate employee?
- a. Very Useful
  - b. Useful
  - c. Useless
  - d. Very Useless

8. Do you have any other comments regarding reference checks? (ex. Questions, problems, suggestions)

9. After the Orion Survey has cleared a potential sales associate, how often do you do a follow-up interview?

An interview is conducted face to face with the candidate to evaluate their qualifications for the job through verbal questioning.

- a. More than 75% of the time.
- b. 51-75% of the time.
- c. 25-50% of the time.
- d. Less than 25% of the time.
- e. I have never conducted an interview.

(if answer is a, skip question 10)

10. What are your reasons for not conducting follow-up interviews more often?

11. How useful to you are follow-up interviews in selecting the best sales associate employee?
  - a. Very Useful
  - b. Useful
  - c. Useless
  - d. Very Useless
  
12. After you interview a potential sales associate, how often do you give them the Orion Survey?
  - a. More than 75% of the time.
  - b. 51-75% of the time.
  - c. 25-50% of the time.
  - d. Less than 25% of the time.
  
13. How often have you interviewed an employee who you didn't hire?
  - a. More than 75% of the time.
  - b. 51-75% of the time.
  - c. 25-50% of the time.
  - d. Less than 25% of the time.
  - e. Every employee I've interviewed, I've hired.
  
14. If rehiring a past employee, how often do you call HR for eligibility?
  - a. More than 75% of the time.
  - b. 51-75% of the time.
  - c. 25-50% of the time.
  - d. Less than 25% of the time.
  - e. I never call HR when rehiring a past employee.
  
15. Do you have any other comments regarding follow-up interviews? (ex. Questions, problems, suggestions)

16. After the Orion Survey has cleared a potential sales associate, how often do you conduct a past employment check?

A past employment check is conducted by calling the previous employers of the candidate to verify past employment.

- a. More than 75% of the time.
- b. 51-75% of the time.
- c. 25-50% of the time.
- d. Less than 25% of the time.
- e. I have never done a past employment check.

(if answer is a, skip question 17)

17. What are your reasons for not using past employment checks more often?
18. How useful to you is a past employment check in selecting the best sales associate employee?
- Very Useful
  - Useful
  - Useless
  - Very Useless
19. Do you have any other comments regarding past employment checks? (ex. Questions, problems, suggestions)
20. Put in order the steps you would use in your screening process when hiring a potential employee.
- |                             |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Background Check            | _____ |
| Give Application            | _____ |
| Follow-up Interview         | _____ |
| Interview                   | _____ |
| Orion Systems Survey        | _____ |
| Offer Applicant Job         | _____ |
| Past Employment Check       | _____ |
| Reference Check             | _____ |
| Other, please explain _____ | _____ |
21. Please describe any other screening tools that you may use when hiring a new sales associate employee.

22. Check the items below that you consistently do when training and orientating a new sales associate employee.

- How to use the register
- Give store tour
- Explain procedures for missing work
- Introduce to other store employees
- Explain work expectations
- Quiz and Quest
- Explain importance/expectations of customer service
- Review policies from employee handbook
- Provide name tag and explain uniform policy
- Discuss/Review the new hire packet

23. Who is your district manager?

- a. Tom Benson
- b. David Miller
- c. Jen O'Neill
- d. Pat Shea
- e. Irene Zinniel

Thank you for taking the survey!

If you have any other questions, comments, or concerns that come up after you have completed the survey, please email: [Lenioj@uwstout.edu](mailto:Lenioj@uwstout.edu).

## Appendix B: Project Explanation Letter to Store Managers

February 8, 2006

Dear Store Managers,

We are about to embark on a very exciting project that will enable to us enhance our hiring and training practices of our sales associates. In order to do this we must first evaluate our current processes. For this, we are lucky to have Jim Lenio, a graduate student from UW-Stout, help us. Jim is using this as his field problem for his master's thesis. He will be looking at the screening tools we currently use (Orion survey, background checks, interviews, etc), our training and orientation programs, and our turnover rate. He may also doing a benchmarking study in which he will compare the above mentioned items with other companies in our industry (Super America, Holiday, Kwik Trip, and others). In the end he will make recommendations for our company based on the data collected.

In order for this project to be successful we need your input and cooperation. Jim will be sending out a survey to each of your email accounts. In this email, there will be a link to a website that contains the survey. Please answer the questions honestly in order for us to receive the most accurate information. The more accurate the information we receive the more we will be able to help you find more qualified new hires. The survey will be anonymous; no identifying information of any sort will be requested.

Within the next few months, Jim will also be conducting random interviews with new sales associates. After two weeks of being hired, he will be asking them questions regarding the orientation and training they received. Jim will contact the stores and set-up these interviews with the new sales associates.

In advance, I appreciate your help with this project. It gives our company a chance to make some critical improvements at the sales associate level.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

President

Cc: District Managers

## Appendix C: Store Manager Survey Email Invite Letter

Dear (Store Manager's first name),

As a part of the study being done to reduce sales associate turnover, we invite you to take this survey regarding the usage and usefulness of screening tools as well as the training and orientation process. The survey is completely anonymous and the results will be reported as a whole.

**To begin the survey, click on this link: #SurveyLink#**

If for some reason your computer doesn't work or will not load the survey webpage, contact your district manager and a paper survey will be mailed to you.

Please be sure to have the survey completed by Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

*What will the data collected be used for?*

The data collected will be used to improve the usage and processes of current screening tools, training, and orientation so that the turnover of sales associate employees can be reduced.

*Who should I contact with questions?*

If you have questions about the survey itself, you may contact Jim Lenio via email at [Lenioj@uwstout.edu](mailto:Lenioj@uwstout.edu). If your computer will not load the survey webpage, you should contact your district manager and he/she will bring a paper copy of the survey to your store.

### **Informed Consent**

I understand that by electronically returning this questionnaire, I am giving my informed consent as a participating volunteer in this study. I understand the basic nature of this study and agree that any potential risks are exceedingly small. I also understand the potential benefits that might be realized from the successful completion of this study. I am aware that the information is being sought in a specific manner so that confidentiality is guaranteed. I realize that I have the right to refuse to participate and that my right to withdraw from participation at any time during the study will be respected with no coercion or prejudice.

This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies.

NOTE: Questions or concerns about the research study should be addressed to Jim Lenio at (715) 232-4093. Questions about the rights of research subjects can be addressed to Sue Foxwell, Human Protections Administrator, UW Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 152 Voc Rehab Bldg, Menomonie, WI 54751, phone (715) 232-1126.

## Appendix D: Interview Questions

## Interview Questions

1. Briefly describe the training you received in the last 2 weeks.
2. If you could change any aspects of the training, what would it be? How would you change it?
3. What was the best part or most helpful part of your training? Please describe it.
4. Do you feel that your training was adequate? What would you add or remove from the training?

| <i>Item</i>                                   | <i>Don't know.</i> | <i>Familiar but I'd need help.</i> | <i>Could explain it right now.</i> |
|---|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Lunch and break schedules.                    |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Dress code regulations.                       |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Work and performance review schedule.         |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Daily duty list.                              |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Procedures for calling in sick.               |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Requests for time off, how it's handled.      |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Clocking in and out.                          |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Receive phone numbers, where they are posted. |                    |                                    |                                    |
| How holiday schedules are handled.            |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Employee parking, vendor parking.             |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Smoking area and policy.                      |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Employee purchases.                           |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Phone use.                                    |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Employee theft.                               |                    |                                    |                                    |
|   | <i>Yes</i>         |                                    | <i>No</i>                          |
| Store tour.                                   |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Met crew and management.                      |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Received new hire packet.                     |                    |                                    |                                    |
| Completed insurance packet.                   |                    |                                    |                                    |

## Appendix E: Exit Interview Form

Store # or Location: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your feelings of the amount of work you were expected to do?

\_\_\_\_ Overworked, way too much to expect, all of the time

\_\_\_\_ Most of the time the workload was just right, too much at times

\_\_\_\_ Appropriate, I worked at a good pace, not overworked or underworked

\_\_\_\_ Underworked, too little to do, I was really bored with nothing to do

What did you like the most about the position you are leaving?

What did you like the least about the position you are leaving?

What were the major reasons that led you to leave our employment?

Are there any issues you would like to bring to our attention?

What recommendations would you have to make Company ABC a better place to work?

Would you recommend COMPANY ABC to a friend for possible employment?

\_\_\_\_ Yes, of course

\_\_\_\_ Yes, with some reservations

\_\_\_\_ No

Could anything have been done to help you on your job or prevent your termination?

\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_ Yes, please specify:

Would you like a follow up telephone call to further discuss this evaluation or a specific issue?

\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_ Yes, if so from who: \_\_\_\_\_

Number to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

## Appendix F: Store Manager Survey: Reasons for Not Using Background Checks

### Other Screening Tools Ruled Out Applicant (7):

- Lack of information that is given by the previous employer.
- To verify dates on employment, I also listen to the attitude of the previous employer when I ask about work attitudes. These often are the only information that I can give is date and time of employment to you or what a good employee.
- The person may give a bad first impression.
- When I call the other business is not willing to give out any information. Everyone seems to be afraid to say the wrong thing.
- Have no interest in hiring after seeing other results.
- Generally if an employee gets into any sort of trouble I am the first to hear about it. This store is located in a smaller community where pretty much everyone knows everyone.
- After rethinking about the interview may feel that individual isn't quite the person I was looking for, or something just didn't seem right. Also how they scored in the certain areas of the survey.

## Appendix G: Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Background Checks

### Need A Quicker Response Time (14):

- Would like to see faster turn around on data.
- Need a quicker response time.
- Sometimes to slow in getting info back.
- It's not so much that I think background checks are useless. It takes so long for them to come back I've waited as long as 9 days for some to come back and they've been good. So it's not because there no good. When most managers need to hire they need to hire now. I've also had people get a different job because it took so long.
- Need quicker response time.
- Faster response time.
- Wish the process could be faster.
- It would be helpful if there was a faster way to get the results of the background checks. Some take more than a week. It would be nice if we had an online one that we could check ourselves.
- Sometimes it takes a long time.
- That they are back to the store in a more timely fashion, most of the time they are but there have been times when we have to call to check with the office
- We need a quicker response time. I have to wait 4 days for an answer.
- Results can be slow in coming.
- A faster turn around.
- Length of time for processing. Unless court issues are complete background checks can be misleading.

### Problems (6):

- Information the previous employer can give is limited.
- No idea how accurate they really are.
- I think the Orion is worthless.
- May exclude a deserving person.
- I use them all the time but there are times I feel I should have to. I know the person and I live in a small town.
- Some fall through the cracks.

### Good Tool/Would Like To Use Them.(5):

- It's a great tool.
- South Dakota should have them.
- I think it would be nice to do them here if the cost wasn't so high.
- Very useful in that people can not always tell you about past problems.
- I would never hire anyone without doing a background check, and if it were to come back "bad" I would not hire them.

### More Information with Responses (5):

- I'm never really sure if they are just job jumpers or if there is something to be concerned about.

- Supplement the findings with research, statistics, or probabilities about the applicants' future behavior. In other words, perhaps the applicant was arrested for petty theft. Based upon solid research in the field, that person has 77% (for example) chance of stealing from an employer. THAT'S some helpful information to a manager. Knowing what kind of criminal history the person may have means very little unless there's a frame of reference for it. Otherwise, hiring managers just have to go on "instinct", which is a pretty lame way to select talent.
- When background checks come back there is no information shared at store level it is ok to hire or do not hire. More explanation needed to make a fully informed decision.
- I wish they would give us more info on the checks.
- I've had some applicants tell me that they made a bad choice a while ago and it was a minor issue one time mistake and they can't believe it showed up. We have no clue what the deciding factor was they just tell us to pass sometimes people mess up and do change and in one I feel I lost a good person I witness down the road at my competitor where she works.

#### Minors (4):

- Background checks are good to find bad people, but what about people who haven't had a job? We hire a lot of younger people who don't have a long work record.
- Anyone under 18 yrs old, it's a waste of time because the state is not able to give out any info on any minors.
- Background checks would be more useful if they could also be run on minors.
- We have hired people under 18 who have criminal backgrounds, because background checks are not done on these people. Also, the background checks are not accurate.

## Appendix H: Store Manager Survey: Reasons for Not Doing Reference Checks

### Limited/Poor Information (16):

- The responses received on most are of little value due to liability concerns.
- Didn't realize it was needed and most previous employers don't give any information about them.
- Sometimes not always useful.
- Most of the time they can't tell you anything, except that they worked for them.
- Most businesses won't tell you anything. So I find it a waste of time.
- Usually don't have the time and checks that I have done in the past, the past employer will not tell you more than that the employee worked there and for how long and if they would rehire or not. Personal references are usually not reliable maybe if we had a form to follow on what types of questions to ask - I think that would be useful.
- No info from any other company. Fear of lawyers and answers.
- If the person has been out of work for a while it is hard to get a reference from a previous employer as turn over in area is high. If they have had large gaps in employment history or multiple jobs in a year chances are that they may not be in good standing. Personal references are always biased.
- I usually do call for all the applicants. The former employer 95% of the time won't give out any info other than yes they worked here they were on time or I can't give you any other info, other than they were employed here.
- Not too many people give out information.
- Very little information can be discussed with former employers.
- Trouble getting a hold of the right person. No useful information is given.
- They don't give you a lot to work with in there answers yes we would rehire they worked here.
- Each time I have done one no one wants to give out any information on the person.
- No one will answer any questions or information.
- Information that is necessary is rarely allowed or shared.

### Don't Trust Reference (10):

- A lot of people put down people who would only give them a good one. Some even put down people who have worked at the store they are applying at.
- Do not know what questions to ask and the legality of it. Also assume that the references will be glowing considering the applicant has supplied them.
- Why would you have a reference that would give you a bad reference?
- Do not trust the person to put down an unbiased reference. We try to hire people from the neighborhood that current employees already know.
- They only give the names of people who will tell us the good not always the truth.
- Everyone has personal references that are good; friends and relatives are going to give a positive response.
- Usually the person is referred by friend or family.
- Timely playing phone tag uncreditable references i.e.: friends
- Usually a referral or family referral.
- I believe that their friends and family members and they are going to lie for them.

## No Time (8):

- Not enough time.
- Usually don't have the time and checks that I have done in the past, the past employer will not tell you more than that the employee worked there and for how long and if they would rehire or not. Personal references are usually not reliable maybe if we had a form to follow on what types of questions to ask - I think that would be useful.
- Most of the time you needed the employee last week.
- Time.
- Too busy and I do a pretty good job at hiring.
- I could never get a hold of the reference.
- Timely playing phone tag uncreditable references i.e.: friends
- Not able to get a hold of the references and most of the people I hire that everyone currently works for me knows them.

## Legalities/Liability (6):

- The responses received on most are of little value due to liability concerns.
- Do not know what questions to ask and the legality of it. Also assume that the references will be glowing considering the applicant has supplied them.
- Most companies will only tell you if they worked there and the dates - too worried about liability to say anything negative about the person.
- No info from any other company. Fear of lawyers and answers
- They never give any pertinent information and are usually restricted by law in doing so. They just give starting and ending dates.
- Because they can't tell you anything but how long the person worked for them.

## Know Applicant Personally (4):

- Know the applicants family or a referral.
- I already know the person, or know the place where they worked.
- Often know the candidate in question.
- I usually know them.

## Need Forms (3):

- Need forms.
- Usually don't have the time and checks that I have done in the past, the past employer will not tell you more than that the employee worked there and for how long and if they would rehire or not. Personal references are usually not reliable maybe if we had a form to follow on what types of questions to ask - I think that would be useful.
- I don't have a form to follow for it.

## Didn't know it was needed (2):

- Never really thought I had to.
- Didn't realize it was needed and most previous employers do not give any information about them.

Other (4):

- I like to hear what people have to say about that person.
- Employee verification.
- Just started hiring process.
- Applicant is recommended by current associate.

## Appendix I: Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Reference Checks

### Limited Information (10):

- Usually do not get any information except dates of hire.
- Very limited on what they can give you for information.
- Limited information can be obtained.
- Unfortunately the past employers can't tell us everything they would like to or we need to know.
- Very few businesses will give any real info anymore.
- Nearly all former managers will only confirm past employment and never give any other info, just as we are trained.
- They would be better if a person could get info.
- Most previous employers can't give any information.
- Other than asking about an applicant's re-hire status with his/her former employer, very little can be legally discussed.
- They are very helpful if you can talk to someone who will share information.

### Trusting the Reference (9):

- People have to be honest with who they put down.
- I selected "very useful" for question #6, but this answer applies only if an honest reference is given.
- The only reference I would take in to account is one from someone I know personally.
- They can be good but also can be bad if the employee puts their friends or family on the list. You don't know if they're telling the truth.
- The person already knows the applicant and say whatever I want to hear.
- Probably the hardest part of hiring it's someone else's word on a future employee.
- Sometimes you can tell by the tone of the former employer's voice if the employee was ok or not, even if they won't give you much info on them. Say you ask them if the employee was on time, when they worked and the employer hesitates in answering, then I think that either something was up with the employee or the employer couldn't remember they employee.
- Not the personal ones they are most often someone the person knows well and so they may not be trustworthy.
- You really have to watch for personality conflicts that occur when you decide because you might find someone that works well with your style and the previous employer might have been the problem.

### Comments and Questions (4):

- Not sure that reference checks would help maybe they would? Not sure.
- Even with good references the associate still doesn't turn out good.
- I think they should always be done.
- What type of questions can you actually ask the reference?

Too Much Time (2):

- Sometimes response time.
- Response time – sometimes get the run-around or phone tag.

## Appendix J: Store Manager Survey: Reasons for not doing follow-up interviews

### Decision Made After 1<sup>st</sup> Interview (11):

- Discuss the job and requirements, etc. before offering the Orion survey. If they pass then I make a job offer.
- I have usually already have talked with them at time of survey.
- The only time I do a follow-up is if the follow-up questions are something that concern me.
- One interview is suffice to: -gather info on the person's personality -establish rapport - determine suitability. Going over critical points (or "areas for concern", I forget the terminology) is something that can be done out of a interview setting. Although helpful to be aware of, I doubt many managers look at them. The manager that trained me did not put any stake on them.
- If I know I like that employee and he or she fits the schedule then I don't need to.
- I interview before I give the Orion to determine whether to bother or not.
- Why would I do a follow-up on someone after I have made a decision?
- I feel to do a good job the first interview process.
- I interview prospective candidates before giving the survey and in most cases have another brief meeting after results come back if there are any questions or doubts before I make a final decision.
- If I feel that I have done a full interview and am comfortable with the person, and the test comes back with no major highlights then I will sometime let the second interview go.
- I have made up my mind at the first interview. I wouldn't waste the time or money on all other hiring steps.

### Already Know Applicant/Trust Referral (4):

- First impressions or again they were referred.
- Most hires I know, or are friends of people who work for me that I trust.
- Already know the people getting hired.
- Referral.

### Usually Do Follow-up Interviews (3):

- I do a second interview most of the time.
- I conduct interviews on all new hires.
- It depends on how many and what numbers come back on the post interview.

### Other (2):

- Need people fast.
- Never thought about doing more than one.

## Appendix K: Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Follow-up Interviews

### Training Needed (6):

- Never rehired a past employee. In past jobs I hired a lot. One thing I learned is that hiring 100% of the people that you interview means your standards are most likely too low. I suspect many people in this company hire almost 100% of the people (or most likely, the first person) that they interview. This will probably get them horrible results. However, most managers receive no guidance or training on this concept or process. My suggestion is that the company put time and effort into an actual, structured training for managers (new AND experienced) regarding the ENTIRE hiring process: Effective recruiting-screening-interviewing-initial orientation.
- Would like some feedback on the type of questions that would be good to use in an interview, the type of questions not allowed and whether or not it is legal to give any type of math or similar test to indicate whether or not this person really does have something on the ball.
- We as a company need have a booklet with questions involving situations. I had one when I interviewed as the H.R person for Shopko and I still use the same question process now that I am here
- More training on the types of questions to ask and how to ask them in order to get the most honest answer.
- Very few of us have received any training in conducting effective interviews.
- I would like some questions to ask. Maybe like a standard question (some good ones).

### Concerns (5):

- You never know if the person is really going to workout until they start.
- Too bad there are so many good actors out there. It would be nice if they would show their true colors before hiring them instead of after the fact.
- very time consuming
- Some of the worst interviews end up to be the best employees. Some of the best interviews have ended up being terrible employees.
- None, some of them seem very honest until you hire them.

### Comments and Suggestions (4):

- I generally interview a minimum of 3 applicants before I make a decision.
- I think that these are 2 good tools.
- Interviewing someone does not mean you have to hire them.
- Should always interview.

## Appendix L: Store Manager Survey: Reasons for Not Doing past Employment Checks

### Limited/Useless Information (17):

- Never get any information.
- It is very difficult to get meaningful information.
- I assume that there is little information that I can obtain legally to help in making a hiring decision.
- It doesn't really tell me anything.
- As I said - most companies will only give you employment dates and salary ranges.
- We rely about present employees who know the people's background.
- No other information can be given.
- They do not give out enough info no more.
- Past employment checks give me no information. The only thing that they will verify is whether or not they were employed and the dates of their employment.
- Past employers can't give any information.
- They can only tell you so much, nothing bad about the person.
- Hard to get a hold of the right person. No useful information given.
- Little information, same answers.
- Most employers won't say anything other than whether or not they worked there.
- Employers give little or no real info.
- Employers are not very helpful.
- A lot of the time they will tell you they do not give references.

### Trust Employee Recommendations and Referrals (5):

- Referral.
- My hires have been recruited using one sole technique: employee recommendation. Employment checks are good to check the work ethic, work habits, and circumstances of leave. In my few hiring cases, there was little need to investigate these since the reputation of this employee was "guaranteed" by another trusted, loyal employee.
- Employee recommendation.
- Referred by family or friends.
- Referral.

### No More Screening Needed (4):

- I do them as a part of the reference check.
- Demeanor in initial interview. Candidates may not have personal work history. Candidate may not be what I'm looking for so I move along with the process.
- I go by the interview that I do.
- Unneeded.

### Legal Issues (3):

- We were told not to call people because of the legal issue that can popup.
- I assume that there is little information that I can obtain legally to help in making a hiring decision.
- They by law can not tell you anything.

Not Enough Time (3):

- Time and lack of.
- Time, employers give little or no real info.
- Not enough time.

Already Know Personal Work History (3):

- Know their work history from personal experience.
- If they worked around here I know if they worked there or not.
- Some of the employees I hire are 16 or they are customers I have met.

Seasonal Employees (3):

- Sometimes we needed the employee last week sometimes it's just a seasonal worker.
- Sometimes we needed the employee last week or sometimes it's just a seasonal worker.
- Sometimes it's their first job sometimes they are just seasonal workers.

Need Forms (2):

- Need forms.
- Need a form.

Other (3):

- Never hired before now.
- The answer to this question is in # 5.
- No phone number for past employers.

## Appendix M: Store Manager Survey: Other Comments Regarding Past Employment Checks

### Information Misleading or Useless (11):

- Some past employers won't give you honest answer because of the reason why people leave.
- Only useful if you get info which is rare.
- Sometimes you get the run around on the phone so you give up.
- Information is limited previous employer attitudes can be misinterpreted.
- Sometimes you play phone tag.
- You don't really know until the first two weeks that they work here.
- Depends if they actually say anything or not.
- With the laws in place you are unable to get info in most cases.
- Past employment information can be misleading.
- In a high turnover area it may be hard to find a supervisor still in the position or company that will remember the person.
- With the limits on the information that a past employer can give you it is not always helpful to call them. However you can get a lot just from the tone and wordage.

### Never Used/Want More Information About Tool (6):

- I have never done one.
- More information would be nice.
- Really haven't used this avenue.
- I haven't utilized this step enough to consider it a useful tool.
- They don't give references anymore.
- What types of questions can you ask a past employer?

### Suggestions and Tips (5):

- Good tool.
- People change with jobs, current lifestyles, etc....
- These also are a must for me. You might not find out a lot, but one important question you can ask is if they would rehire this person.
- They only give you required info, sometimes you can tell by the tone of their voice if there was a problem with a past employee, by the way they hesitate when answering a question.
- With the limits on the information that a past employer can give you it is not always helpful to call them. However you can get a lot just from the tone and wordage.

## Appendix N: Store Manager Survey: Other Screening Tools Used

### Current Employee Opinions (12):

- Other employees.
- Check with present employees.
- My employee's opinions.
- I always ask my active employees if they know applicant and what if anything they can tell me about them.
- Check with present employees.
- I ask my assistants for a first impression.
- Info from employees.
- I may ask my assistant manager to sit in.
- Networking information through employees and customers.
- Ask my employee if they know them what they know about them – and my kids (it's a small town).
- Other employees that approach me with thoughts or info. Family friends
- Ask other sales associate, or my family.

### Body Language and Appearance (6):

- I look for good communication skills. i.e. nice firm handshake with eye contact. If they can't look at me during an interview or upon first visit my concern is that they will be unable to do it with a customer.
- Eye contact.
- On time, looks (how dressed), personality.
- Eye contact and gut feeling.
- Appearance, dressed well, clean, shows up for interview early or on time.
- Watching body language.

### Word of Mouth (5):

- Word of mouth.
- If hiring a student like talking to teachers and coaches.
- If the person is from the area, and I've seen them speaking with other people I would ask then other people about the person. I observe his or her actions when interviewing, and re-ask questions to see if they come up with a different answer.
- Talking to others who know these people.
- Small town word of mouth.

### Interview Questions (4):

- During the interview I always ask the applicant to tell me a good situation that happened and a bad situation and how they handled it.
- Set of interview questions.
- Ask a lot of questions in the interview.
- I always ask a good applicant to describe a good experience through previous job and to tell of a bad experience and how they handled that situation.

## Other (6):

- Just be honest with them.
- Get to know the person.
- Intuition and character assessment.
- Try to hire outgoing people who are not afraid to plus sell.
- I have a check list that I go by.
- Newspaper if they have been in the police beat.

## Appendix O: Sales Associate Interview Theme: Support

### Training Support (23):

- And then he ahh put me over on the till with being supervised and ahh any questions that I had they were always there.
- I am pretty confident with the way I was trained and I enjoyed every minute of it. I'm very confident with the way I was trained and I'm very thankful with the way I was trained. They were very helpful towards me and were always there for me whenever I needed anything.
- That actually the management here is actually umm respected and manage...like takes...does their job, which impresses me. Which probably isn't such a big thing because it's supposed to be done, but that fact that...I don't know. It's hard to explain because the management is everybody's friend and not really their boss. If that makes any sense.
- Umm...having people, cause there was another, umm, person that was hired the same time I was, and probably having people work there longer than, you know, a couple months that would be working with me, so, like, they would teach me how to do more stuff and, ah, like, if I didn't understand something the times I did work with the girl that was, um, hired at the same time I was, you know, she didn't didn't understand really how to do it either and... it was kinda bad. So, but if, probably the best thing was probably having more experienced people working with me.
- Probably getting, umm, showed several times where stuff is and having, umm, my manager and, like, other coworkers being patient with me and knowing that it's gonna take a little bit for me to know and memorize where everything's at.
- She (the store manager) had nothing but patience with me and same with the coworkers, nothing but patience with me.
- She (a co-worker) was always within range to ask a question and come over.
- They did a very good job, they made it easy...
- ...they (co-workers) were always there so if I made a mistake all I had to do was go (to a co-worker), and she would be over there, so you know, its not like they would run outside and go sit there for a half hour, they were always within range.
- ...they had the manager and then the assistant manager so that if one of them is doing something, there is always, there is always someone there to help if you are having a problem. So there is never a time when you are really left alone when you are new, which I like.
- The best part of the training...having someone standing there while I was learning the computer, learning the register and not really breathing down my neck. Because sometimes when you are learning things you wanna have a little bit of space, but not too much. You want someone kind of around, but not watching you and seeing what you are doing. So the fact that they are there, but not right there.
- ...just being able to yell out help right out, right away and to have somebody there or something like that. I'd have to say its being able to have them right there being able to see what, able to see what I was doing, and before, yeah watching them right people up and stuff like that before they actually put me on there.
- I think how they let me observe first instead of putting me right on the register, you know. So I think that the observation part was the best part...

- ...she basically went through it and then explained what she was doing while she was doing it and then if there was something that she needed to do twice she had me do it and then ah, the next night I did it and she corrected me if I did something wrong, was basically...
- When like co-workers and stuff were actually showing me how to do it and stuff when I had a question. They would come and they would like tell me how to do it...and then after that I would know how to do it from there. And if I still have questions, they will come help me.
- Um you know I think it helps having someone next to me that rings next to me was always very helpful, because if I ever had a question I could just look over to my right or my left, and say hey how do I do this? And some body was there to answer me. Um, so I think having that person there, always having two people at the register, while somebody's training is a very good idea because there's all sort of questions you have, it really helps out a lot when you have that person right next to you, you can just ask them.
- Was that the general manager sat there and coached me through it when I was at the register. If I wasn't sure on something he's show me how to do it or tell me how to do it and I'd do it. Like he pretty much just sat there and coached me through it and if I wasn't sure on what to do or, what to press he'd show me it. Or show me again. Um, at the end of the night when you get trained in for the closing of the drawer, or counting out the drawer, he'd count out the drawer at first to show how to do it, and show us where everything went on the sheet, and what we were suppose to add up and everything. So that was good. Um, when in, the times he had to leave or when he wasn't here, he had the assistant manager show us what to do, or how to do it. So we always had somebody there that knew what they were doing to show us what to do. Or show me what to do rather.
- Yeah if we have questions, the manager says just give him a call and he can come in and help us, or he gave us little cheat sheets to work the register or anything that we need to do.
- Ah, just that they were there when I was doing it, and I liked how they kind of had me do it, but like they didn't do it for me, they didn't make me watch them over and over again. They did it once, and then just stood there and kind of let me figure it out for myself, but had, would help me if I needed help. Ah that, eve, even after the training was completed we had, ah, managers' phone number so we could get a hold of him any time that we had any other troubles.
- ...then the other gal that was working showed me how to open my register and kind of walked me through step by step so I would remember the next day. And then pretty much just showed me how to stock shelves, and ring up customers and she always stayed right next to me just in case I messed up.
- Just knowing that no matter... that I could... if something happened they were right there, so that I didn't have to panic and the customer didn't have to wait to long.
- Well, the supervisor and the manager would help me out if I... if I had a problem or something, I could call them at home and then they'd would walk me through the steps. Like if I come across something on a credit card or something, and it wouldn't go through, they would sit... or they'd be on the phone with me and they'd explain how to get around it and be able to ah, figure... or fix the problem that I was having. Well, the

fact that they come in and, or if I couldn't get a hold of them at home I'd call them on their cell phone and they'd tell me that they'd be right here, and then they'd come in and they'd help me out they'd be right there and they'd walk me through it while I did everything, and they would tell me how to do it, um, what needs to be done on it.

- Um just the fact that they would explain it and then have you do it and make sure I knew it before you know explaining absolutely everything and then I could do it after that. Just through one aspect of training at a time, until I understood it and then moved on.

#### Positive Training Specifics (17):

- Um the hands-on experience. Just getting right in there and working with the register right away and the...having like...not standing around and just watching actually doing.
- my manager has a I think she has a really good system of doing things and she has lists for everybody certain things they have to get done before they can go and...obviously if they haven't done it umm the appropriate person will find out and they will be told...you know...if...some things never really left undone there's a pretty good work ethic here as opposed to other jobs I've had.
- I thought it went rather well. I mean I've had...I've been employed at other places that haven't nearly done as nice of a job actually (laughing) of trying to keep make sure I'm informed about what I'm supposed to do.
- I just think, umm, my management, she trained me in, umm, to the standards, showed me, like, everything, where everything's at. How to do it the proper and correct way. Every day is just, ever since that I got done training I know that this is the standard and all I can do is either achieve them or exceed them.
- Well they have little like cheat sheets all over, like for the for the codes, for the key I use, so that's, that's very helpful.
- Well the setup is easier. Yeah, you know, cause the groceries...pops, and everything is done in keys, so that made it easy.
- I would say actually leaving me alone and letting me feel thru the register. They kinda just let me figure it out for a while myself. That was the easiest way to learn. After maybe an hour or 2 of standing next to me while I did it and stuff, they just kind of let me have at it with the register. They were for the first couple hours, but they had stuff to do. There's a little call system that you can hit that rings in the back that they will come up if I have any questions or anything. They kinda just let me go at it.
- I don't really know if I would change anything (about the training) I mean I'd say that the way that I, the way that I was trained was probably easy enough cause see the type that I, the way that I learn is more hands on, rather than being told. So, to make mistakes, and then learn how to fix them and stuff like that is really what helped me.
- You know, any questions I had they were very, they were willing to help me.
- ...and basically the walk through, the walk through really helped me out. It let me know how to stock and how stocking the cooler worked.
- Best or most helpful part of the training... By not pushing it, like, onto someone, like, not pushing it on me like, knowing what I needed to know, like, they said that I, it would take a while for me. They didn't, like, push it on me. Like, ah, they did it slowly so I would understand it. You know, they didn't push and rush me, like, to learn it.

- Um, probably if anything the other thing that was... glad I got explained to me was probably staking the tanks.
- I guess doing it myself, ya know, as she, like, explained it, um... it seemed like a lot at first, but, ya know, after you do it a few times, ya know, and you can get it down in your memory...
- Well, I wish both my manager and my supervisor get a raise, but... (Laughs).
- he (assistant manager) wanted to work with me one night to go over a few things that he thinks some of the associates may have forgotten simply cus it's out of second nature to them and he wanted to make sure I knew everything before I worked one night on my own.
- I thought they did a pretty good job.
- The last job I worked on the register with someone for an hour and a half and they threw me on a register on my own. (Here I was given) Much more training and it was completely understood that I knew everything I needed to know.

#### Co-worker Attitudes (12):

- the people that had it opened were very like very helpful.
- I knew some of the people it's a small town so I've come in here before and the people here have been real nice and I've met 'em before so coming into it wasn't very hard.
- It's fun and you get to meet a lot of new people.
- ...you know there is always someone here with ya, so, they are really helpful.
- Um...I think that that the attitudes of everyone, was...people being...um (pause) helping with a smile rather than acting like they are...I think the attitude is the whole thing, everyone here seems to have a good attitude, everyone here doesn't seem crabby to be here and helping people. It is not really, it's a helping tool.
- ...sometimes the most important thing to have, someone with a good attitude. That isn't you know, that makes you want to stay at your job. When you have people that are kind of down all the time...I don't want to go to work.
- I mean it was great, people were really nice. I'm used to, I'm normally really nervous starting at a new place because you have to meet new people and new employees. My first day my stomach was just turning, I was nervous, I get like that, and the people were really nice. Like the trainer, she was really nice, and people I work with I thought, I don't know, I thought I was gonna be really uncomfortable meeting new people. You know they could have been snotty, but they really made me feel comfortable that first day, it was great. Well, I mean, they were talking to me and not just letting me wander around. I was really quiet my first day and they were like 'why are you so quiet?' and were really friendly and I'm not used to that. When I worked at SA, and uh I did not like it. The people were rude, the other employees. My manager there, I hated him. Even though I knew what I needed to do, they didn't help me out with nothing. And then coming here it was great. I know what I have to do but I don't know where everything is and they let me know. They were nice people. I mean like, I enjoy coming to work everyday here, I do. That's like honesty because I'm not a morning person and I make it here everyday on time at 6, so I like it here otherwise I wouldn't be here.
- But I don't know, I like it, I like the people here. That's my favorite thing about here.
- They were patient, nice, patient...they didn't make me feel stupid.

- The co-workers attitudes and everything, they had such good attitudes. I mean when you come into a place where the co-workers have bad attitudes you don't even care to be at work...
- Yeah, I think everybody is here is very helpful.
- Umm, basically just the friendliness of the people working here. They are friendly, really personable, could get along with them immediately.

#### Pace of Training (5):

- I would say the most helpful was when I got myself stuck and I went and got (the store manager) and he pulled me aside and he ahh we apologized to the customers and he showed me slowly how to get myself out of the situation that I was in on the till. He's (store manager) just...he's very nice and he's very calm with me both (the store manager) and (co-worker) were both very calm with me when I needed it.
- They let me work at my own pace so I wouldn't, like, overdue it or anything and do stuff half-ass. They just let me take my time, make sure I did it the first time correctly. Showed me the standard, I met it, and then they just gave me patience on making sure like, I actually had time to actually, like, remember everything.
- I think just like how they slowly did it, took their time and made sure I was ready before they actually made me independent on the register. I think that it was better than other places.
- Because they were just very explanatory, and they took the time to... teach it to me. They didn't, like, rush through it. They just... if I didn't understand it, they're very understanding and said, "Yes, we understand... it, sometimes this takes extra time." ... or something. They were just very understandable too, if I didn't understand something.
- Just that she took it really slow, and she showed me how to do it properly.
- As in he really takes his time, very slow, doesn't want to mess up on anything.

## Appendix P: Sales Associate Interview Theme: Opportunities for Improvement

### Training Specifics/Suggestions (26):

- I wish that...the paperwork is so confusing to me because it's the first time that I've worked in a gas station. And I kinda wish that there was a little more one on one with it, but with talking with the other employees and watching...watching how they do their paperwork and watching how (the store manager) and (co-worker) did the paperwork...I..I kinda wish that I was umm..supervised a little bit more on that and (the store manager) did the best that he could and the main person that was ahh showing me the paperwork was (co-worker), but she'd get that done and I'd finally caught on to it...of how to do it. *Facilitator: What could they have done to help you with that?* I think just kinda give me the paperwork let me write it, tell and show me how to do it, so that way I could figure it out for my first time.
- at the end there is a lot to catch on to about closing out and closing all the systems and I probably prefer to do that umm a little slower, but I catch on pretty quick so it wasn't too bad I guess. Well it was it was just a lot of umm things to do there's like umm sheets that help you out and stuff. I just...had trouble kinda following how to do exactly how to do all the ahh z-tapes to the...to the records you write down the first few nights, but after a few shifts it got a lot clearer, so I don't know. There's now way you can really practice that more though because you only do it..you can only do it so many times...you know once a shift so... That was probably the hardest part and I don't think you can really change much of that. Otherwise it was pretty good I think.
- my biggest worry about umm working by myself is just um not having my numbers match up at night like not counting (I can't understand what is said here) or something which would just be a fault of my own than anything else so... people have certain things that help 'em figure things out quicker like where they might've messed something up like they kind of...there's a way you can figure it out without having to redo everything and probably being told how to (giggles) how to do that better probably would be helpful but... As far as right now I would have to like redo something completely as far as someone else might know how to do it like an easier way to find the mistake if that makes any sense. Well like say for example umm if something on your slip doesn't add up there's usually a really easy way to find out the obvious mistake, but since I haven't been here long enough I can't see the obvious mistake so a way that more explanation on how they figured out the obvious would be helpful. I've been count...Like I've been here doing something and the number came out wrong and someone came and helped me and they found the mistake like right away and they were like, "Oh this is wrong," and it wasn't really explained how they figured it out. So I would just have to...like this evening for example, if I screw up my numbers I'm going to have to go back and recount everything as opposed to when I was with someone they would just be like, "Oh this wrong," and then fix it.
- Umm...like, it wasn't really, like, any certain thing, it was just some of the directions weren't as clear as they could have been. Like, when you're stocking stuff in the cooler, like, they tell you to, like, switch around the dates so the fresher stuff is in the front and the older stuff is in the back. But, you know, if you have older stuff you want to sell it

first. So, like, you would tend to just leave it there and cause more work for everybody, and, I don't know.

- Umm...not really the training, but the interview process. There's like three different interviews that you had to keep coming back to and it was just, like, why couldn't you just get all of it done at the same time, kind of. Well, like, the first interview, like, when you drop of your application, it's just me and they kinda tell you what it was about, and, like, all your responsibilities and, like, what you'd have to do, and, then you, you know, they tell you to go, er, Brent was actually the one that interviewed me and he was like, I don't know if you want to take this job or not and if you're still interested call me back. And I knew right away I was, so I told him, but he's like well I should call you, er, have you call me back and, you know, get ah, umm, like a second interview started and then I came back from the second interview and that's when I had to do, like, the company, like the test, you know, and, umm, so that was pretty much just doing that the whole time and then we talked about a couple of the questions, that, like, you know, certain ones at the store picked out, to like why I answered this way and bla bla bla. And then I had to come back again and we talked for it a little bit more and see if I had any questions and then he told me and the end if I got the job or not. And, like I only live a couple blocks away but it's still, you know, kinda a hassle to keep going back three different times when you don't even know if you have to job. So, that kinda of, I don't know, kind of a nuisance.
- Umm, just showing them, like, like, the people that know they're gonna be on the evening shift, umm, they'll show them how to do stuff for the morning time. Cause you never know when you might have to take over someone else's shift.
- ...it would be more helpful if there would be sale flyers that you could actually see what's on sale and you know, me being part-time you know, all the sales change, so that's hard, but... Well there are some, there are some like map, no those are around, but there was something more visible, it would be easier.
- ...the only thing I would think about adding is um...would be, and this just comes after you have been here a while. There are, like what I was saying about the cigarettes, there's like a bazillion cigarettes up there, and ...umm...to find, when someone comes in and is kind of impatient because they have had someone who has worked here for years and knows exactly where they all are. And there is nothing they can help with that other than...just after a while you know where they are. It is just that some people get impatient. (pause) And I think other than that they did a pretty good job with the training.
- And maybe something that I think would be helpful is something that is written down. The handbook was fine, but something that is kind of a step by step...this is how you do it... For the closing, the opening, just so that a new person doesn't have to ask how do you do this again. Cause like I said everyone is friendly but there might be someone that isn't that friendly one day. It would be nice to have something written down that says ok...you do this and you do that and you do this...and you know I used to work at a target before I even worked a position. They always had us do um...even though it sounded dumb, that you opened up your computer, just the simplest things, that...this is how you do your job. Something like that with the opening and closing would help.

- The only thing I had trouble with at first was the procedure at night and during the day.  
*Facilitator: So what would have been a better way (to train on procedures)?* Ummm, maybe just shown that to me the first day, or when ever, just sometime.
- ...I know a difficult part was the refunds...
- ...I'd have to say that also one of the most helpful parts of the training had to be stock... so I could learn where everything is the store was.
- So I think I would have explained more of what goes under what and stuff like that. Like what's taxable and what's not and kinda stuff like that, which is grocery and what's everything else.
- Smokes I think is the one I've had the hardest with so smokes is what they've helped me out a lot with. The PLU numbers for all the umpteen different PLU numbers and I'm trying to get all of those down with learning the PLU numbers. That's the hardest stuff of all is learning the PLU numbers.
- Um, more of the paperwork. The, ya know, like... have it more... like, descriptive part of it, like, it's hard to do the paperwork, like the closing shift paperwork. So, I wish... I want that to be... I would like that to be easier, but I don't know if you can make that any easier. That's probably my hardest part of the whole night. I guess you could say the steps were somewhat confusing, I mean, like knowing where from your z-tape to add or subtract, ya know, from your gas totals, or your... ya know, other totals, ya know. All your different kinds of totals... ya know.
- I do definitely...think they need to get a scanner in here, instead of PLU's.
- Probably just in the beginning probably explaining like if while they were doing it to expl... all they had to... all I basically need to know is have them tell me what I need to know at least once...just have who ever was teaching me tell me at least once instead just having me go through it.
- Um probably paper work cause that was the hardest stuff at first.
- ...maybe just going over it (opening and closing) a few more times I guess, but um, they have it all written down kind of by the registers just a few things to remember. The important things... Well, I guess maybe one week, learning like the morning so you get that down, and the next week maybe learning um, the night so you get that, ya know, completely down.
- ...there are some things that I still don't know, that I guess I would like to know, such as like you know the cigarette count... Getting comfortable with the register, um there's...like taxable items, and non taxable items. Um so you know, just to know what to ring those up under. Um just getting to know the register with all the keys, with you know, prices, they way that they want you to ring them up, um, car washes, credit cards and all that.
- Oh yeah, there was one time where I wasn't exactly sure how to work the Company ABC coupon cards or whatever they are.
- ...actually one thing there was ah, there different cards that you swipe through the machine... And there, there's credit cards and then there's like the gas club cards or whatever... Or something like that, and those I had no clue how to do those at first, when I, I didn't know what they were when someone handed it to me.
- Things that I was having to call with would be... like a PLU on a cigarette that had gotten misplaced or something, that I couldn't find or ah, like the ice bags, I didn't know what the... I forgot what the PLU was...

- Have you heard of the restaurant Famous Dave's? I also work there and their training, they put thousands of dollars into their training to make sure their employees are the best they can be in like a week. Which basically what I'm saying is that if the company invests more people into what they call trainers, which I am over at Famous Dave's, which is basically people that excel at their jobs and they go to other stores when they have new employees. Or at their own store those are basically the only people that train them in.
- I mean you don't give a new person just to somebody who doesn't really do their job great, you give them to someone who does their job the best. I don't know that's my thought.
- Um, I would add a trainer (laughing) if that makes any sense. Uh and I would add more time.
- I would suggest the Famous Daves approach to it. It sounds kinda lame but I believe that they have their training to a Tee. They spend a lot of time on training, when I got hired there you got trained for the first week for 5-7 hrs per night. I mean it was crazy intense and was like whoa you guys keep going over it but by the first night it opened it was crazy busy and we could all handle it.

#### Longer/More Training (9):

- Probably give a little bit longer of a training day cause I only got the training, umm, it was, it was like three or four days and it was only four hour shifts. (I would suggest) Probably at least like, between five or six hours for training because four hours, I mean, you don't really get the, umm, learn like a whole, whole lot because depending on the time that you come in, you might not have to clean the hot bed rollers or you might not have to go outside and, umm, do the garbage. Make sure everything is all stocked, umm, the correct way outside. Cause you never know, like, cause I'm always supposed to be working in the morning shifts, but I also get stuck with the, umm, evening shifts on the weekend because there is an employee that doesn't like to work weekends, so I have to come in for him during the evening. And the first time I can in I was a little lost, I didn't know fully, like, everything that had to get done.
- For someone different I would say to have someone stay with that person more, but you know, I was able to, you know I was able to be by myself.
- Maybe more hours I guess. Yeah because I trained to open and deposit, do deposits and stuff like that so, like somebody else probably wouldn't be doing anything, wouldn't have to learn all that in that amount of time I guess... there was a lot covered in a little amount of time...
- Try to give a person a little longer to get to know everything in the store before they put them on by themselves. I'm asking for more training actually....I think I need a couple more weeks with someone being here with me. Probably 2 weeks (more).
- Just more time, I guess. For one period, I guess. Like, like I said if you had more than one person there so somebody could go and show somebody how to run the store without being interrupted, that'd be great.
- Because there's a high turnover and we didn't exactly have a lot of employees here. So it was like I needed to learn it fast so we could get into the flow.
- Being thrown in I mean learning everything I did in the amount of time I did. It was kind of overwhelming, frustrating.

- I would probably keep them on the till, and just keep them on the register for a few days...rather than throwing everything at them.
- Uh and I would add more time...probably 2-3 days of training with another person.

#### Trainer Issues (7):

- Umm...I don't know. Like, yes and no. Because, like, the stuff they taught me, like, they'd teach me shortcuts, you know, and stuff like that, but, like, the, umm, like the other stuff that I would have to do, like, either people didn't know how to do it or, like, I'd do it one way that the people would, my coworkers were telling me how to do it and then the management would come in and be like, that's not really how you do it." So we'd have to do, like, all this other stuff, and, I don't know, but it was kinda confusing sometimes, and... And, like, even on the coworkers it'd vary of different ways to do things, and, you know. Yeah, if it wasn't, well, like sometimes the management way of doing things would be more complicated and, you know, you'd still get the same direct results with the coworkers it really was, like, a quicker way of doing things. And, so, it made more sense, but, I don't know, like, I guess, if I would have one way of doing things it'd probably be like, you know, a combination of the two cause there's some things you can't skip. But...I don't know if I'm making sense.
- Um I'd probably have somebody else do it. The girl who trained me didn't exactly care to much about her job so I wasn't exactly showed how to do things... properly you could say. I'd just have somebody more who... somebody who cares more about their job more to come show me how to do it. After I got trained in by this girl who didn't really care, my assistant came and showed me how to do things properly and she showed me how to do it instead of telling me how to do it.
- ...the first person I worked with wasn't really much help and neither was the second person but the third person helped me so then I got it finally... I would have just picked a different trainer for the first couple days.
- ...I just came in and who ever was working helped me with what ever I needed to know, and I worked with... three of the people that worked closing, so I got closing shifts mostly.
- I think its good to be trained in with the manager, store manager, and then the day shift people that are here. Because they are very consistent on their training. Rather than, hearing, you know, when it comes to one subject- five different ways to do it. You know, I think that it confuses people in the training process...
- She didn't really, like, help me much. She just kinda, like, let me do whatever. She was off doing her own thing, like she'd watch me every once in a while. She was really brief, didn't really, like, do a very good job at training. She just kinda let me figure it out. Like with the closing and everything, she just, she just flew right over it. Like I asker her a couple questions, she was just like, well you'll get it. Yeah, she just kinda did an like an overview, she didn't really, like, we have to close the registers and run reports and stuff and she just, like, told me that we had to do that, she didn't really tell me how to do that or where the things were to do.
- The person I was trained by got fired the day afterwards for stealing from the company. I was trained for about 2hrs and then I got to do my first day by myself. What happened was they said ok we're gonna train you on the till so I went up and started doing on the till and the lady that was supposed to be helping me would just kinda wonder off for a

long time. I don't know where, she would go outside and she would talk to people and I don't know it was kinda weird. So I really had to figure things out by myself and it was kinda stressful. You know what I mean, it's kinda like being thrown in a boat or canoe in the middle of the ocean and it's kinda stressful. Yeah, so, I mean the first day I worked with here but the other days I got to close by myself and I had no training. So because of that I still learn new things every single day. They are like 'you didn't learn this when you were trained?' me and the other employee used to work here almost as long as I have but his training was about exactly like mine. The person who trained him was just kind of...didn't have an urge to do their job. That would be why they no longer work here.

#### More Convenient Training Times (5):

- Umm...I would probably have, ah, more people, like, up there cause there's only two people like working the register, er, the two registers and you know if I had a question on someone who was doing something else it was, you know took a while to get an answer and then the customers were always kinda, you know, upset about that then I'd feel bad, but, that was pretty much it. Umm, there's, ah, like one of the sheets that we have to do at the end of our shifts that, you know, make sure we're not off I would probably have more of a formal direction sheet cause there's a lot of numbers and is really confusing, like, the first couple times you look at it and you're just like "Ahhh!"
- ...well it was during the weekday so it was pretty busy so it was kinda hard to help a new person and get everyone, all the customers taken care of and everything so, it was kinda busy that day and everything...it would be better on a weekend or on Sunday.
- I just have like an extra person on shift so instead of having the usual two people on, I'd probably have like three people working so um one of the people who actually knows what there doing and there's training can actually show the trainee what to do with out have to worry about there not being anybody there to run the registers. Like it was just me and the other girl, and it was (pause) very hard to really learn anything because it was constantly having to ring people, I didn't really get to go learn how to do anything.
- ...maybe just learning one shift at a time. Just learning mornings... then learning afternoon, and then learning nights, maybe. Then working that, ya know, for awhile and then switching over but, otherwise its pretty, ya know, almost the same throughout.
- ...I think maybe at a slower time in the day would be a easier to show people how to do it. Cause when its busy, you know, they move kind of fast, and you cant really comprehend everything. But maybe at like a slow time in the day it would be better to train people in. Normally we get kind of slow about 5 or 6 o'clock. So I'd say anywhere between 5 and 6 o'clock would be good.

## Appendix Q: Sales Associate Interview Theme: What is Actually Occurring During Training

### Trained by Co-workers (15):

- my manager...one of my managers did (trained) one shift and the other ones were by coworkers.
- *Facilitator: Umm, so was it mostly your coworkers that were helping you or was it mostly your store managers? It was mostly the coworkers.*
- Well (a co-worker) was training me, and she did a very good job...
- ...he had the shift leader train me. He helped me out quite a bit too even though I already knew everything.
- ...pretty much just kind of watched while she (assistant manager) showed me...
- ...we have assistant manager also and that's the person I was working with. She's been working here...quite a long time so she's you know and she's the assistant manger so she's kind of well aware of how this place works and everything so .
- Another staff (trained me).
- But, I was mainly trained by my co-worker.
- Um I was scheduled with a girl who's been here for about a year and she showed me how to run the registers and ring customers up and do the job duties for the store.
- Um, well basically I just came in and who ever was working helped me with what ever I needed to know, and I worked with... three of the people that worked closing, so I got closing shifts mostly.
- Well, she's not the man... she's not the manager, but she's like the next like highest one, I don't think she really has a title but, she's the next um... I would consider her... the one I'd call if I ever needed help.
- ...and so then I did it that way, and then I trained with another person for the night shift, um... and then I trained with another person that closes for the night shift. One was female, one was a male.
- I was trained in by another employee.
- Yeah it was actually a variety of people (who trained me).
- ...the ways the schedules worked out it wasn't able to be the same person but it was only, it was 2 associates and one of the managers.

### Trained by Store Manager (7):

- The training that I received, it was, umm, given by my manager...
- Well, (the store manager) just showed me pretty much the ins and outs of the store and where everything is.
- It was mostly the manager, or the assistant manager. Or otherwise if they were busy or if they were talking to somebody or something then I, er, another associate would help me.
- The manager at the time (trained me).
- Well, (the Store Manager) just showed me pretty much the ins and outs of the store and where everything is. And then kinda just stood next to me. They rang people up while I watched and then let me do it and let me ask questions and stuff like that.
- It was a store manager and an um employee (who trained me).
- *Facilitator: Was it the store manager who did the training? Umm, yeah.*

Training Process: Explained, Observed, Tried (24):

- Well they showed me first...the first thing they showed me...was ahh...they gave me a glance at the till to let me kinda get to understand it a little bit...then they walked me around and and showed me the things I needed to do ahh...checking up on the coolers and front basing and checking up on the cappuccino machines and making sure there's lids and cups and cleaning off the valves for the soda machines. And then he ahh put me over on the till with being supervised and ahh any questions that I had they were always there. And umm...started showing me how to do my paperwork. Really it's...it doesn't sound like much, but it actually kinda is. (Laughing)
- I think I came in on a Monday the first evening. Umm...I came in and I was explained to what I was supposed to do when I enter like when I come in for my shift at 5:30 and I start at 6 there's a few prep...a few things you need to get done prior to the 6 o'clock person leaving...while they're getting their till all counted out and stuff, so I was told how to do those things. And then throughout there's a list of things that need to be done throughout a shift and I umm started working on the register and shadowed someone and they showed me what...how they did the routine of what they get done per hour and try to do their like kind of system of going about doing things and showed me the list and continued to show me how to do the cleaning procedures. But mostly for the first night I practiced working the register so I would get used to it because there's PLU's and such things.
- The training was pretty much, ah, they showed me how to work the cash register and then they, like, trial by error kinda thing. And like they would hover over me for like day and then I was just kinda umm you know if I needed help on something they would, you know, show me how to do it but there wasn't like actually like a orientation or anything like that. They showed me you know pretty much everything but, well they showed me everything like on the first day but I didn't remember all of it so it was kinda worked over gradually. And then, umm, it wasn't that hard but you know there's little like tricks and stuff that I needed to learn how to do that they kept showing me over like a week or two.
- ...she just walked me around the store, told me how to do things and made me do everything hands on so I was learning how to do it faster. Umm, I was trained by, ah, regular cashiers on how to run all of, like the, registers and fill the propane, and then everything else I did I just pretty much, like, well my manager guided me on, umm, where everything was and how or what the standards were and everything. It was just, like, getting, umm, the hot dog rollers and the tornado roller, umm, up and going, make sure everything is nice and clean. Make sure everything, like, when you walk in it's a presentable store. Make sure that, like, there's no smudge's on glass. Make sure that we always have fresh food on. Umm, I had one cashier that, umm, showed me how to run the register and did stuff behind the counter, like stocking up cigarettes, making sure everything, like, the umm, smokeless tobacco is, umm, put in the correct order. The oldest one in the front, the newest one in the back.
- I just watched for a couple of times then jumped right on there, and she was there for any questions that I had.
- The training that I received was um...being taken up to the front area, I wasn't told to do anything right away, I observed people working, I sort of got a feel for what's what was going on up there.

- I actually filled out paperwork with the manager...and took about 45 minutes to go through that, and then I received a handbook and we looked through that and then I went out.
- Well, just showed me pretty much the ins and outs of the store and where everything is. And then kinda just stood next to me. They rang people up while I watched and then let me do it and let me ask questions and stuff like that.
- I went through the hand book, went thorough everything, make sure I knew what everything was and then I went out the front and just observed the other the, other two, ah, workers that were here that day just to watch them ring up and stuff like and then they, because I only had a short first shift and then they had me ring up a couple and stuff like that and see if I had any questions about anything um. And then over just over the first week that I was working any time I had any questions I had somebody to ask, or something like that. Showed me how to do the cooler how to pick up stuff make sure everything looked neat in the store.
- I pretty much just kind of watched while she (assistant manager) showed me, you know, the register and the PLU's and how to use the, ah, um power ball, or the lottery machine. Just basically showed me how to use all the machines and the cash register, and what you're suppose to fill out as far as paper work like during your shift.
- ...she would just let me do a little bit...we just did it together. And then I think the next time I did a lot more, next time I came in.
- ...when I first started working first couple hours they had three people here and I was working with (the assistant manager) on one register and then the other register was this someone I think (a co-worker) or something like that so umm I basically watched you know and they told me just to get an idea of how a register works ...they try and teach you the best they can you know but most of it you do learn on your own probably different situations and stuff like that and mm so its coming both ways you get trained by them but you kind of train yourself also. So basically it was like a walk through before I actually started working so she just wanted me to have an idea of how this gas station works.
- Showed me the till and showed me where everything was and things like that. Then they teached me how to run the till. I think one girl would sit there and do it for a little while and then I'd go on and she'd help me out.
- ...well I trained on the register for about like a week. And then umm... that's when I started, after that week, that's when I was prepped on how to make coffee, hot dogs, fill the cap...fill the cappuccino machine, and (pause) umm...like fill in the cups and straws and stuff like that. If you need it they'd let you try it to see if you knew what you were doing first, and if you didn't you could always say, "well, you know, I don't know how to do this" and somebody was here to show you how to do it and then you had a chance, on your own, to see if you could, like, get it, or whatever else.
- Lets see, well the first day I, ya know, usually you just watch... and then like, the second day I came in and she trained me again on the second day um then I kind of, ya know, did she... I did stuff as she explained it um... cause I think that's how most people learn better, ya know, if you do it yourself.
- They showed me how, they explained it, and then they just had me try it.
- Showed me everything. What there is to do, inside the store, outside the store, the register, and there was another person helping out too. And then let me do it on my

own. They showed me what to do and then made me re-do it. Yeah, well we split it up, say if we were doing the garbage like someone would do half the garbage and I would do the other. Or if we were doing something on the register they would point out what to push, what to do and I would do it.

- Another thing I thought of was (the store manager), you know when I was ringing up on the till, when I was first learning that, he was right by me and he would tell me you know like 70 PUL like he would walk me through it. Like talk me through it. As I was doing it, he would be next to me and he would kind of talk me through it.
- At first, they I, they asked me if I was comfortable doing it, and I said no cause I wanted to watch it a few more times to get it down better. And then when I thought I felt comfortable, I, they let me do it and I did it.
- Oh yeah, they gave me one demonstration and then they kind of just let me figure out how to do it for my- well not figure it out for myself but like, let me do it myself so I'd know how to do it. I was working, they had me working the register and they were ah, I think they were doing the paper work or whatever for the day and they were kind of just watching me, and helping me out if I needed help on anything, or had any questions.
- They explained things, they ah, ah, I watched them on the till and when they did things they would explain it and then like the next customer would come in and then they would explain it and let me go after it, so it was more like a hands on type deal.
- I, well, I just walked in and then, ah, both registers were filled so I just kinda shadowed my trainer for about 20 minutes then she just had me do everything on the register, ring everything up. And pretty much just learn on my own. If I had questions just ask her. Yep, I just watched over my trainer and just kinda watched what they were doing for a little bit then she just put me on by myself and watched what I was doing, made sure I didn't screw up or anything.
- Basically after the lady got fired they (the store manager) were like 'whoa, you don't know how to do anything'. And they kinda stepped in and were like, 'ok, this is how you do this, and this is how you do this, this is how you do this, this is how you do this, this is how you do this, now you're good'.
- Basically I just, I worked a few nights with someone else and they gave me examples of how everything works and watched over as I tried it out for the first few times. When both the managers and I decided that I knew it well enough I started working on my own. The first several times was me being shown what to do and being shown and explained thru step by step and then them watching me and helping me out along the way as I did it.

#### Sufficient Training (7):

- I don't think I'd change anything. I don't think I would. I'm very confident and very proud how I was trained. Umm I have very good co-workers and (the store manager) did a great job on training me and so did (other employee). And they were there for me every step of the way.
- *Would you have removed anything or added anything from the training that you went through?* No I would not.
- I don't feel there's nothing I don't know how to do.

- I think that everything, that, umm, is taught during training is important because you, er you have set standards and with standards you either have to achieve them or exceed them.
- No everything that was in the training you needed.
- To be honest with you, I don't think I would change anything. It went really really well and I picked up really quick, and... I mean I didn't... I barely had any questions my second day at all.
- (many interviewees mentioned that they didn't think they needed more training)

## Appendix R: Sales Associate Interview Theme: Training Inconsistencies

### Lunch and Break Schedules (15):

- as far as I know there's...the break is when the store is empty and everything's done you can take a little smoke break, keep an eye on the store, a customer comes you go in and you automatically take care of them. As far as the lunch break, it would be about the same thing. You just do eat in the count...at the counter and the customer comes in you automatically put the food down and you go ahead and take care of the customer. But first making sure that everything in the store is the way it's supposed to be cleaned up, restocked, and straightened out.
- I haven't worked...I don't...umm I haven't worked...I've worked a day shift with two people so I haven't really had a lunch break or I haven't be on an 8 hour shift long enough to really need a break.
- Well, it's pretty much, ah, whenever there's a quiet moment, you know, you can grab something to eat and pay for it, or, and keep it behind the register and it's not really like a technical break or anything, like, or, like, most of the people that are here smoke so, you know, if it's a quiet moment you go out and run outside and have a quick cigarette and then come back in and keep working. I never, like, knew there was a formal break thing or anything like that.
- Basically it's just whenever we have, like, down time and we have, umm, one person behind the register, we're able to have like one person go out back real quick, have a quick cigarette whatever they need, or else eat, like, real quick and if it gets too busy then they just call for us and we run back up.
- I usually only work 5 hours, so I don't take a break.
- Is there a lunch and a break schedule? No. See, it's...I don't think we really have a lunch and a... a break schedule. Like, if you need to eat and somebody else is here with you, you'll go in the back and eat, and then they'll stay up in the front. And when you're done then you have to come right back up here. There's no set amount of time that you can take a break.
- I don't really have... I don't work during lunch ever.
- We don't have 'em.
- um... yes, there are none took.
- Um, I was really never told anything about lunch and break schedules. I just take a smoke break whenever I want one and I don't take a lunch break.
- Um, I mean some what basically the breaks are just if you are working 8 hours you get like two fifteen minute breaks and a half an hour break.
- Uh, no I don't cause I don't take lunch or breaks off. So I don't really know it.
- Ah, we don't have that (laugh) I, I don't know that.
- I'm pretty familiar with that. We go about every two hours and take like a 10 minute break.
- Um, lunch and break schedules ah, for me it would be after four hours I could have a 10 minute break (pause) for every four hours you get a 10... 10 to 15 minute break, depends on how busy you are.

## Dress Code (9):

- Um... the dress code I had to get kinda, reprehended cause I wasn't sure how, you know, strict it was and I had sweat pants on, and umm, a hoodie that was, it was a Corona hoodie and they said that, you know, the Corona thing might be considered advertising and you're supposed to look better than that, so, pretty much jeans and the vest and a nicer shirt over a hoodie or something.
- Yep. It has to be, umm, a solid colored, umm, T shirt that's collared. With tucked into either, umm, khaki, black, or umm, blue, like dress pants. Not like jeans, but pants. Tucked in. If you're in the fruit stand I wear an apron and we have to have our name tag clipped on. Or else we have our necklace thing, we have to have that clipped on
- Well you gotta wear your smock and your name tag.
- Umm... Tennis shoes, no open toe, and you can basically wear jeans and t-shirts. As long as you're not, you know, smelling or anything.
- I mean I think I pretty much think, I... just, jeans that don't have holes in 'em, and shirts that don't have holes in them, I don't know, and no bad language, drugs, alcohol, I don't know.
- um... I think just wearing the smock. I think that's it... no inappropriate stuff I'm sure.
- Ahh...I think...I read a little form on that I think when I started up but the regular- its pretty laid back, I don't know.
- That one, I don't know about. I know you have to have your vest and your name tag.
- Yes, I do. Ah, you cannot wear anything white...(interrupted by phone).

## Training Time Length (10):

- ...they kept showing me over like a week or two.
- A little over 20 (hrs of training received).
- I had three days of training.
- For like a week (I was trained).
- It took about two days before I had everything down.
  - I mean I'd say, maybe three, four (days of training)??
- Uh, I'd say about three shifts. Yeah three days is what I meant.
- Probably like 2 or 3 (days training).
- Well, I only had one night of training, and it was pretty brief...
  - ...I had 3 days of training...and once I got to my third day, I was perfectly fine.

## Procedures For Calling In Sick (5):

- Umm, I didn't know there was a procedure, I know that, you know, there's a list of numbers, and I've written them all down at home and I usually just call and try and have someone to work for you as soon as possible, er, you know, as soon as you can, or work for you. And then call (the store manager) and see if it's Ok with him if this person can come in and work for you.
- Umm...I presume you just...I wasn't told any specific procedures but I presume you just call in... and inform them as soon umm as possible.
- Umm... I'm guessing... before your shift at least two... two to three hours before your shift.
- No I don't know that. But I don't call in sick, cause I'm never sick, so... Yeah. OH, I guess I do, if I'm gonna call in sick, I know I can just find someone else to work for

me. Ya know, they told me that, ya know, just find someone else to work for you usually, so I guess I somewhat know that, if that's...what you're looking for.

- No I haven't called in sick yet. Do you just call the manager or the assistant manager and... the day before or two hours before or something like that?

## Appendix S: Exit Interview Comments: What did you like most about the job?

### Customers (63):

- Customers. I love working in a gas station/convenience store. I have met many wonderful people working in them.
- Interaction with the customers.
- Opportunity to meet new people.
- A few of my co-workers were fun. They helped time pass. I knew a lot of the customers, it made it fun to be able to chat with them and know what was going on.
- Variety of customers.
- I love the customers, and relating to them. Many of them came in because they knew I was working and liked to chat with me.
- I liked everything about my job, I liked working with all my co-workers and liked seeing all of my regular customers, and every body always made my day. I had a lot of self rewards knowing that my customers loved seeing me when they came in and knowing that I helped some one with directions or even changing a tire for someone who couldn't do it.
- A few of my co-workers and some of the customers.
- I loved working with the public and the staff.
- The customers were always friendly, fun and easy.
- My customers.
- The regular customers.
- The customers were always nice.
- Customer interaction.
- Friends and customers.
- My customers and the type of job I did. I also liked most of the people I worked with.
- The people I worked with and the one on one relationships with regular customers.
- The customers.
- Customers.
- Customer contact.
- Being in the retail business and meeting lots of customers.
- Working with customers.
- I liked helping customers and talking with some on a first name basis. I also enjoyed working for (store manager).
- The employees and customers.
- Working with (co-worker) and the customers.
- Working with people.
- The public.
- The customers.
- Getting to work with customers.
- I liked meeting new people and the interaction with the customers. I liked always having something to do.
- Dealing with the customers and forming great friendships with a lot of them. Also, I enjoyed my employees.

- I got to know a lot of people.
- That I had a good experience with others.
- I enjoy working the till and conversing with customers.
- I felt like I was a huge asset to my employer. I knew all the customers by their first names- so well in fact that I received cards/gifts showing their appreciation.
- Interaction with customers and staff.
- The other workers, customers.
- The customers.
- The flexibility and regular customers.
- Interaction with the people having a chance to improve someone's day.
- Working with people.
- Customers and some of the staff.
- It was fun at time, Nice people.
- The customers in the morning.
- Seeing all the people.
- I liked the people, I miss them.
- I liked the job duties and customers.
- The customers and fellow employees.
- I liked the hours and the salary. I also enjoyed working alone, the register, and regular customers.
- The fact that I did not have to get up early, plus I got to meet lots of different people.
- Customer contact.
- I really liked some of the people, made some great friends.
- I liked the people, both customers and co workers.
- The people I worked with and the customers.
- My customers and the other employees.
- Dealing with the customers.
- Customers, I like working with people.
- Interacting with the people, easy, laid back work to do.
- I loved the people I worked with. Working with the public, getting to know the regular customers.
- Friendly co-workers and regular customers.
- Meeting the nice people.
- The customers.
- The customers.

#### Co-Workers and Staff (41):

- Personnel - great staff. Very Organized - (store manager) does a great job.
- I needed somewhere to make money on the side and so that is why I thought it was a good job other than the pay being low. Also, the manager was really easy to work/get along with.
- A few of my co-workers were fun. They helped time pass. I knew a lot of the customers, it made it fun to be able to chat with them and know what was going on.

- The community and my opportunity to interact with them each and every workday. I loved my manager and loved working with her and most employees.
- I liked everything about my job, I liked working with all my co-workers and liked seeing all of my regular customers, and every body always made my day. I had a lot of self rewards knowing that my customers loved seeing me when they came in and knowing that I helped some one with directions or even changing a tire for someone who couldn't do it.
- A few of my co-workers and some of the customers.
- I loved working with the public and the staff.
- The staff was friendly, and the job was fairly enjoyable.
- The people I worked with!
- Helping running the "till" and the people.
- Manager and work staff.
- Fun, easy-going, causal atmosphere, easy to get along with co-workers.
- The people I worked with.
- Almost all of it, but the greatest thing was my boss.
- The accommodations Trudy made to work around our schedules. The people I worked with.
- Fun people to work with.
- The people under me and my peers.
- The work atmosphere and the co-workers were great! My manager was understanding, flexible to the schedule; it is not often you find a manager like that.
- The people that I worked with.
- The employees and customers.
- Working with the public and some of the coworkers.
- The management! They listened to their employees, they made me feel like I mattered and they listened to my opinions. Couldn't have asked for better leaders.
- The job was really fun and the time went by really fast when I was at work. The atmosphere was laid back and I thoroughly enjoyed my co workers.
- Dealing with the customers and forming great friendships with a lot of them. Also, I enjoyed my employees.
- Manager was very flexible with my other jobs to making the schedule. Meeting people
- Interaction with customers and staff.
- The other workers, customers.
- Flexible hours, good manager, decent pay, discount on gas.
- Working with the co workers.
- Working with nice people.
- The manager and co-workers were great! I left because I was done with school and started a new career.
- Customers and some of the staff.
- Liked working with the public, seeing different faces each day, and got along with the co workers.
- The customers and fellow employees.
- I liked the people, both customers and co workers.

- My customers and the other employees.
- The overall job of being a store manager. (store manager), if it wasn't for her help I would have been lost.
- The other employees.
- The people I worked with, hours, workload.
- Friendly co-workers and regular customers.
- The people that I worked with.

#### Job In General (26):

- I needed somewhere to make money on the side and so that is why I thought it was a good job other than the pay being low. Also, the manager was really easy to work/get along with.
- I liked everything about my job, I liked working with all my co-workers and liked seeing all of my regular customers, and every body always made my day. I had a lot of self rewards knowing that my customers loved seeing me when they came in and knowing that I helped some one with directions or even changing a tire for someone who couldn't do it.
- The staff was friendly, and the job was fairly enjoyable
- I liked the hours I worked.
- My customers and the type of job I did. I also liked most of the people I worked with.
- The extra cash. I worked two jobs so Joe scheduling me one day a week for extra money.
- Easy Job!
- I liked my job all around.
- Flexible, worked around my school schedule.
- The job was really fun and the time went by really fast when I was at work. The atmosphere was laid back and I thoroughly enjoyed my co workers.
- The freedom to dictate what work needed to be done and when it got done.
- Before the management changed, the job was perfect.
- Manager was very flexible with my other jobs to making the schedule. Meeting people.
- Free fountain drinks.
- The job itself was perfect for my needs. Also the team that (store manager) assembled was awesome as we all worked well and have fun as well.
- Well it's what I have always wanted to do but having less than 5 days a pay period scheduled I was never really accepted into the group.
- I liked everything but I never left or got fired they just told me not to go to work anymore.
- I liked the job duties and customers.
- There was always something to keep us busy, not just cleaning
- The fact that I did not have to get up early, plus I got to meet lots of different people.
- The pace of work.
- Comfortable with the job, got used to it.
- The overall job of being a store manager. (store manager), if it wasn't for her help I would have been lost.

- Interacting with the people, easy, laid back work to do.
- The people I worked with, hours, workload.
- Everything.

Nothing (7):

- None.
- Almost everything until (store manager) came around.
- Nothing the GM made me dislike everything here.
- I didn't like anything about it.
- Leaving.
- Leaving.
- Nothing, I hated it.

## Appendix T: Exit Interview Comments: What did you like least about the job?

### Job Responsibilities (17):

- Coffee set-up, prep and cleaning.
- Having the deli food?
- Having a lot of cleaning jobs to do, while waiting on customers. I pushed customers out the door so I could get my work done.
- Work load. Lack of appropriate pay, (store manager).
- Cleaning.
- Store cleaning, but that's just part of the job.
- I noticed changes in the daily routine. I was working so often that I was being shown no appreciation. I started to feel in competition with my co-workers. It was no longer fun to go to work everyday.
- Was sometimes hard to get cleaning done between customers, didn't feel like I got enough done sometimes.
- Book work.
- Stocking tanks at night.
- Mopping and sweeping.
- Changing the gas sign and no breaks.
- Working.
- Sometimes got frustrated with myself if I messed up on something.
- Doing the outside work, garbage's.
- Changing garbage's.
- The hot dog grill.

### Managers: General (16):

- The employee's and my boss.
- management
- The Manager.
- I suppose sometimes not feeling appreciated by the company in general. I have worked there since 1996 and the benefits have become less and less through out the years.
- My Manager!
- The managers.
- That the boss was a "bitch" and whenever I got to work nothing was done.
- The new manager.
- Dealing with the manager and district manager.
- The manager.
- Work load. Lack of appropriate pay, (store manager).
- The manager.
- The GM
- (store manager)
- (store manager)
- The assistant manager.

## Scheduling (13):

- The managers and hours that I was getting (very few and none at times) The manager had "special" employees.
- Always working until close. Never got weekend day shifts.
- Being called into a shift in which I was not scheduled to work.
- Trying to get the store fully staffed.
- Not set hours every week, but you cant really do that can you?
- inconsistency of the hours I worked. Constant complaining about hours by employees.
- Couldn't get the hours I wanted and didn't have enough time for school work.
- The early mornings.
- Difficult scheduling with other jobs.
- Too many hours during the weekend none during the week.
- I never got enough hours, I was promised 35-40 and only got 12- 25 a week.
- Could have used more hours.
- The paperwork and long hours.

## Managers: Behavior (12):

- Employees not made to feel appreciated for work expected and pay they received. Also, I did not like (store manager) and his girlfriend coming in and just standing there - girlfriend thought she should get free coffee.
- The GOSSIP.
- (store manager) and her rudeness. She seemed determined to make customers angry and employees feel like they know nothing. I felt extremely threatened by her and how she treated others.
- The new manager. He was always saying inappropriate things to me, customers, and other employees.
- The manager and assistant manager expected so much. Liked taking advantage of me.
- The lack of help from the district manager. The blaming of employees for audit shortages. The lack of training.
- The way everyone "communicated" became very annoying. People seemed to never be able to pass along a message about new specials ect. The only communication everyone was good at was gossip, including the manager.
- Mark. I didn't like how he treated my wife and especially when (store manager) yelled at my wife and nothing was done to (store manager).
- Things were said by the manager to be done and changed but never happened.
- Being written up for something I didn't so. (store manager) would not listen to me. For what she got mad at, I would have done to anyone.
- Manager always accusing you of stealing everything.
- Ron and an unfair termination.

## Co-workers/Customers (12):

- The GOSSIP.
- Certain co-workers.
- Some customers. Mainly not enough to do.
- People "bitchin" about gas prices going up.

- The cliental.
- When the shift before mine did not do their expected duties.
- Some of the other employees were very lazy and didn't pull their own weight. And not enough hours given.
- The complaints from customers about old gas handles and pumps. Either people couldn't see them well or they didn't clock off when they were supposed to.
- Being called into work when someone else was sick or unable to cover their shift. Having to finish duties that should have been done before I got there.
- The people on the shift before me did not always do their job so I normally had to do my list plus the things they were too lazy to do.
- working with irresponsible high school kids.
- There was no evening asst. manager so depending on who was working before me, certain things that need two employees to do, didn't get done.

#### Long Hours, No Breaks (7):

- I didn't like not having a lunch/dinner break, I know it gets real busy but a 30 min. break would have been nice.
- Long hours on feet.
- That we couldn't sit down not even for 5 minutes or we would get yelled at.
- no state law required 15 min break every 4 hours.
- standing for hours and hours.
- The standing part.
- The long shift.

#### Managers: Favoritism (7):

- Assistant manager was very demanding towards me. She always talked bad about me to the other employees and the Manager. It made work uncomfortable and unpleasant.
- (store manager). She was the new manager that came into our store after (store manager). She never liked me and I don't know why. I always did my job and cleaning duties, I always went above and beyond my cleaning because I wanted to have a nice clean store for our customers. All of my ideas I gave to (store manager) she didn't like or didn't know what to do with them. That's why I would help her do her job and I would even filler her in if a co-worker was doing something wrong. Before (store manager) I was given a .25 raise and some how (store manager) and (human resources) some how lost the paper work, which I thought was totally unfair to me.
- The managers and hours that I was getting (very few and none at times) The manager had "special" employees.
- Manager has 2 sisters working for her, too much favoritism. Got boring at night, I closed almost every night.
- The manager was good but he did not enforce the same rules for all employees.
- Lack of constancy in manager, okay one time, not okay another. Employee favoritism and customer favoritism.
- The manager used favoritism, and treated me like crap.

## Training Need (5):

- I think the store manager is a good person, but as a manager he needs to improve.
- Always having to train a new manager every couple of months.
- I was not trained in properly so there were some things I was unsure of.
- Hardly any training.
- The employees, theft, never help when you needed it, being thrown into a store after 5 days of MIT.

## Pay (5):

- The pay was too low for what I needed!
- Work load. Lack of appropriate pay, (store manager).
- The pay was not enough to support a family.
- My pay and new changes.
- The pay- too low.

## No Response (11)

## Appendix U: Exit Interview: Reasons for Leaving

### Store Manager: Favoritism, Employee Treatment, Disrespect (27):

- Manager, on more than one occasion, would talk to one of my friends about me, one of the times she was at a bar, drinking, asking personal questions about me. Manager would not let me use my employee gas discount card on a gas purchase for a vehicle I had been driving for a month.
- There was a position opening and it was given to a less qualified employee (Male) and the manager kept asking if I needed time off...
- The biggest reason I quit was because of how the assistant manager and the manager did business. There was never a schedule made up and I always had to go in and see if I had to work or not. Also, the employees have a problem about talking about and complaining about other employees to employees and outside people.
- Management put you down in front of customers.
- Not feeling comfortable in my work environment.
- My boss wasn't always fair. I felt that she picked on me. At store meetings she would single me out and yell at me for things, in front of the other employees. I never saw her do it to anyone else, not in the whole year I worked there, and a couple of the employees thought their only duties consisted of waiting on the customer and little else, and we would all complain about it, but nothing was ever said to them in front of the rest of us... I think a company that doesn't believe in taking care of its employees does not deserve good employees. That's why they don't have an assistant manager to this day.
- One day I was short \$16 and on another day I was short \$20. Store Manager gave me a verbal warning about this and she said to me to be a little more careful, then two weeks later she just let me go (terminated). Within those two weeks before I was let go I wasn't short a dime.
- I worked 2 days a week; my employer felt that I was not learning my job only working 2 days a week so I was not put on the schedule. When questioned, I was told they had already hired someone so there were no hours for me!
- I became sick with pneumonia and mono and had doctor's notes to not work. Store Manager kept putting me on the schedule so my mom called him and he totally disrespected her so I had no choice but to quit.
- The manager. He is very immature and sexist! He was always late and would disappear from the store for long periods.
- The new manager came in and hired all his own crew. Turned everything upside down, changed everything that has worked just fine for the past two years and made everyone's lives difficult.
- Being overlooked for a store manager position when another individual was given a store while being with the company for a day.
- District manager not willing to work with the management staff in handling personal issues.
- Store Manager accused night shift of taking money out of the drawer. The threat of the whole store being fired. Store Manager wanted to change everything and would not take any suggestions from the employees.

- Being guilt ridden to work a shift when other things get planned but making you feel guilty for not staying or just expected without asking, most of the time
- The gm here is a rude, sexist pig. He uses power of position to take control. I felt very uncomfortable around him
- The 2nd week I was there my boss accused me of stealing when I wasn't! She had no money missing but accused me anyway.
- Caught manager lying many times.
- Kept asking for more training but never got it and was treated badly for not understanding some things.
- I was cut from 40 hours a week to 3 hours a week. She brought in all her friends and their family and wanted me to work all Holidays. The 17 year old daughter got more hours than me so I had to find another job
- Was harassed by the Store Manager all two years I worked there.
- Favoritism of some employees, discussion of other employees in front of customers
- Driving, way too many hours for pay. I was being paid less than one of my employees. Assistant manager was no help and very unwilling to help. WORTHLESS.
- My boss said it wasn't fair that I asked people to work for me when my friend tried to kill herself, and then I came into work and worked anyway.
- Store Manager blamed me for the drive off; he is a gutless manager that fired me over the phone around other employees.
- She says that the reason why I had to leave was nothing personal but I believe it was because she played favoritism.
- I never got my 6 month review as my manager promised. Store Manager treated me with disrespect. Before she came back from medical leave I loved my job. But with her back, I dreaded work.

#### Store Manager: General (6):

- The Manager.
- After shopping at the store for 25 years I became friends with the various employees. This was my reason for volunteering to work part-time after retirement. Once the manager was fired and (co-worker) quit, the job went downhill.
- The manager.
- Conflicts with my manager, I was not making enough to support my family, I was losing my drive under certain conditions.
- Dis. Orders (?) and Store manager.
- Let go from...and from N. Hudson because the manager was very mean.

#### Scheduling/Hours (15):

- Working all weekends, Holidays, and 8pm-11pm - not enough hours.
- The biggest reason I quit was because of how the assistant manager and the manager did business. There was never a schedule made up and I always had to go in and see if I had to work or not. There were many instances when I would go in to see if I worked that day, or even the next day, and they would tell me I wasn't working. I would later find out that they had called one of the other employees to come in and take over the time I should've worked. They cut my hours back dramatically and it came to the point

that there was no sense in me even working there, since they had me working one day a week if that.

- Fewer and fewer hours each week and way overstaffed at times. I was not scheduled for two weeks in a row.
- Bad hours, "bitchy" co-workers, got wrote up for no reason.
- I was burnt out; Store Manager kept scheduling me for only weekends. Sometimes I would work 3-4 weekends in a row and when I finally had a weekend off, Store Manager would call me and ask me to come in. As a result of this my job performance suffered.
- Being guilt ridden to work a shift when other things get planned but making you feel guilty for not staying or just expected with out asking, most of the time.
- My hours were cut to give a kid more time when I was hired full time.
- Too many hours at work, disagreements with Store Manager.
- Hours were too early for me and my family.
- Conflicting schedules.
- I was cut from 40 hours a week to 3 hours a week. She brought in all her friends and their family and wanted me to work all Holidays. The 17 year old daughter got more hours than me so I had to find another job
- Not enough hours.
- Let go from the Lakeland store because they were not flexible with my school hours...
- Too many closing hours.
- The back to back hours and not enough pay.

#### Conflict w/School (13):

- Graduate College.
- Interfered with school work and too much responsibility for me to handle at one time, it just wasn't the right time in my life to be in that position.
- Moved away to go to college.
- Too busy with college.
- Graduate College, found a job in my field.
- I couldn't get more hours per week without it interfering with school.
- I wanted to finish my degree.
- Returned to college.
- Another job and school
- I left for an internship for college.
- Started school two hours away.
- Graduated from college, needed to find a full time job.
- My school schedule and other job made it too busy to work at Company ABC.

#### Accepted Another Job (13):

- Had another job so the hours didn't work out.
- Found a better job.
- I found a career. I was also very bored.
- Offered a different job.

- Started a new business adventure.
- Better job offer, more money.
- Graduate College, found a job in my field.
- Another job that paid better and working the two became an overload. Also, some of the male customers became very bothersome to me.
- Got hired at Anderson windows working 40 hours a week, wanted some free time on the weekends.
- Another job and school.
- I got CDL and am driving over the road (semi) with husband.
- Better pay at new job.
- Needed more hours- got a second job and my hours got cut in half.

#### Low Pay (12):

- The pay was to low for me to stay there and work my nights away!
- Low pay.
- Pay.
- I have worked there for over 3 years and people who just started are making more money than me.
- Low pay, not enough hours, poor management, and lazy co-workers.
- Conflicts with my manager, I was not making enough to support my family; I was losing my drive under certain conditions.
- Pay and no hours.
- Didn't receive a raise after 11 months, manager caught lying many times.
- No three month review for a raise. Too much arguing between co workers. Management put you down in front of customers.
- Driving, way too many hours for pay. I was being paid less than one of my employees. Assistant manager was no help and very unwilling to help. WORTHLESS.
- Not paid enough.
- The back to back hours and not enough pay.

#### Moved (12):

- Just needed a part-time job over the winter. Then we moved 20 miles away.
- Moved out of state.
- Moved 1350 miles away.
- I lost my place to live and had no choice but to move. Otherwise I would still be there.
- Moved to Florida for family reasons.
- I was moving out of the area.
- Moved to Florida.
- I moved.
- Moved out of Watertown- too far to commute.
- Moved.
- Moved to California.
- Moving to Seattle.

## Health/Family Issues (11):

- Birth of child.
- Personal- Things going on in my life.
- I was getting medical help and some of the staff liked to start rumors.
- Pregnancy.
- My "heiyein(?)" problems.
- Health?
- Maternity problems.
- I was having family issues.
- My fiancé is very sick and I was taking care of him a lot plus another full time job so I got burned out.
- Too much in my life going on right now. A 2 year old and nine month old, full time college and another job that gave benefits to my children.
- Hours were too early for me and my family.

## Fired/Retired (7):

- I was terminated.
- Retirement.
- I did not leave, I was fired and for a stupid reason. I bought a lotto ticket while on duty and the fraud investigator tried telling me I wasn't paying for all of them.
- I didn't want to leave.
- Didn't really have a choice.
- She says that the reason why I had to leave was nothing personal but I believe it was because she played favoritism.
- The fact I got fired.

## Part-time/Seasonal Employment (6):

- Just needed a part-time job over the winter. Then we moved 20 miles away.
- I took the job to make extra money because my boyfriend was out of work. Once he got a job I didn't need to work anymore.
- I got a summer time job, I would like to still work for you in the winter when sports are going on and you need help
- I was planning on coming back over summer break but the manager that promised me my job back left over the summer and I was not called back after letting the store know I was available for work.
- Did not need the extra income anymore.
- Part-time.

## Conflict w/Co-Workers (6):

- Also, the employees have a problem about talking about and complaining about other employees to employees and outside people.
- Accusations-gossip.
- Bad hours, "bitchy" co-workers, got wrote up for no reason.
- Too many duties to do while waiting on customers. I worked hard at them but other employees didn't so it game me extra work all the time.

- Tired of people called for stupid things (toilet clogged, paper jam). Tired of DM that wouldn't do anything and only seeing him once every 2 weeks, if that.
- An employee that would comment on my every move down to the way I put money in the register.

Conflict w/Other Job (5):

- Time- I have always had another full time job aside from working at Company ABC. I needed to have somewhat of a life instead of working all the time.
- I had too many jobs at that time and my others paid more.
- I have another job, too much for me.
- Crappy hours, it was a second job and just got to be too much. I have two teenagers to keep track of.
- Mandatory overtime at my full time job.

Appendix V: Exit Interview Comments: Are there any issues you would like to bring to our attention?

No (50):

- No, I loved working at Company ABC, my coworkers and boss were awesome!
- No, the store is well run.
- No- everyone was terrific. Especially the DM and the manager.
- (store manager) was the greatest manager I have ever had.
- I think (store manager) needs more respect and money for all the stress he deals with!
- Don't lose (Co-worker)! She has kept up with both stores in... and made many improvements while I was there! She is an asset for your company to have.

Manager (38):

- Employees need to be more appreciated for work they do, everything done wrong was made sure to be brought to our attention. Things done right went unmentioned.
- I think that you should take a closer look at the Manager and Assistant manager of the... Company ABC store. While I was working there, there was never a schedule and I could not make plans with anyone, family or friends, because I never knew when I was supposed to work. Also, the assistant manager likes to take store out of the business. I have noticed that she likes to tell her friends what one of the employees did or what went on in the store. These two people are the biggest reason I quit. I am now working at a competing convenience store with higher pay and I also feel a lot more comfortable working there.
- I was accused of stealing money and written up or something. I found out from another employee that my manager had watched the video and found out who actually stole the money. I was not given an apology nor was I suppose to even know that somebody else had actually stole the money. If I would have been apologized to, I probably wouldn't have quit.
- I do understand that it was wrong of me to quit but for the management to tell employees from my other job that I never showed up for my shift and that I was caught stealing cartons of cigarettes was wrong considering it was untrue! I think it is a little inappropriate for the employees and management to be telling customers things like this because I quit. I have to live in this town too!
- A few. Be willing to pay to get some good help. Offer incentives that make up for the lousy wages. The manager isn't using her health insurance. Why couldn't you let assistant manager have it, if it means you would get a good worker, a dependable person? And give you managers seminars on how to treat their employees. (store manager) would probably go back to Company ABC if she could have the health insurance her family needs.
- Yes, (store manager) should be more courteous. She is no better than any other employee. We need to act as a team. She thought she was better than everyone.
- Yes. The manager was giving hours to people who didn't need them and none to those who did.
- (store manager) has many people who don't like him and many people who won't come to the store because of him.

- Yes, the manager would take things off the shelf for his own personal use and not pay for them.
- Yes, bad management.
- When the manager gets upset she should not yell at the employee and if she does then she should apologize.
- The new manager!! Wrote me off the schedule- for two years I worked a few nights a week and every other weekend, I came in on my weekend and was taken off the schedule without being notified.
- Scheduling, cash shortages. (store manager) threatened to take any cash shortages out of our checks.
- The incidents of store managers dating employees and giving them special privileges over others.
- I retired after 36 years with a large company. I was middle management for over 15 years. To have a twenty year old come into the store as new manager and tell me how to work and how to treat people was completely demeaning and embarrassing!
- (store manager) does not advise the company properly. Bad advice- pay your people better it will make you more money in the long run.
- The manager is a \_ \_ \_ \_ \_! The manager is very rude.
- The manager needs to be more friendly and she needs to stop taking advantage of all the co workers.
- I thought it was unfair for my manager to give bonus Company ABC bucks to people who were not doing their job as hard as some other people. I never missed a day of work and came in every time.
- Train the DM how to help the manager and leave the cleaning to the employees
- (store manager) is a nice person but would favor her daughter and her boyfriend who always got to work together and never had to work weekend 7-11 night shifts
- You should relieve the gm of his duties.
- I feel I have already addressed my areas of concern with my former manager. However the comments and unprofessional acts are still occurring.
- It's good to get along with your managers but being a manager brings certain leadership qualities that are important and happened to be a concern at our store. Favoring people that she worked with on days, talking about employees to other employees- , made me wonder what was said about me.
- (store manager). People need more training.
- Yes! Fire (store manager).
- Everyone was treated different, some better than others.
- (store manager)
- She is selling her side line jobs from the station. People that know I worked there miss me; I will not go back because she is not friendly.
- Harassment, working certain people more than others, Slander, paying people that were not on the pay roll, paying them out of pocket.
- Some things written on my termination sheet, I feel were incorrect
- A bit more training would have helped. Also, I learned a whole set of different books at store then mine. Which took over a month to learn.
- The manager needs to learn how to treat employees equally.
- I got taken off the schedule for trying to help my friend, and still showing up for work.

- I have had at least a half a dozen complaints about the assistant manager's attitude and how she did some of the list "half-assed."
- Yes, (store manager) at the... store held my check for almost a week after pay day after I quit, I even called corporate and they found out that he held it.
- Get better managers.
- Yes, (store manager) told my mother I was fired and told me he put I voluntarily abandoned my job.

#### Respect for Employees (17):

- Employees need to be more appreciated for work they do, everything done wrong was made sure to be brought to our attention. Things done right went unmentioned.
- I was accused of stealing money and written up or something. I found out from another employee that my manager had watched the video and found out who actually stole the money. I was not given an apology nor was I suppose to even know that somebody else had actually stole the money. If I would have been apologized to, I probably wouldn't have quit.
- Take care of your employees, they are the ones that sell your products, if they are happy, they will sell Company ABC products.
- Yes. The manager was giving hours to people who didn't need them and none to those who did.
- They got mad at me because I brought in a doctors note because I had mono
- I retired after 36 years with a large company. I was middle management for over 15 years. To have a twenty year old come into the store as new manager and tell me how to work and how to treat people was completely demeaning and embarrassing!
- I used to manage for Flannery Oil company. (store manager) would constantly accuse me of stealing. I would never steal anything. Talking with past and current employees, I have heard that (store manager) may be stealing and adjusting the books for it.
- The manager needs to be more friendly and she needs to stop taking advantage of all the co workers.
- I thought it was unfair for my manager to give bonus Company ABC bucks to people who were not doing their job as hard as some other people. I never missed a day of work and came in every time.
- The fact that I got fired because I missed my first day of work in 4 1/2 months and I called in. Some one else did the same thing but didn't get fired.
- Its good to get along with your managers but being a manager brings certain leadership qualities that are important and happened to be a concern at our store. Favoring people that she worked with on days, talking about employees to other employees- made me wonder what was said about me.
- Yes, there was an employee there that had the same problem I was having earlier and to my knowledge he is still there.
- Everyone was treated different, some better than others.
- I worked hard at the job, doing a lot of extras that others did not do, but yet other employees would earn Company ABC bucks for picking up another persons shift, wiping up coffee spills ect. After I just did a double because no one showed up.
- The manager needs to learn how to treat employees equally.

- Yes, (store manager) at the... store held my check for almost a week after pay day after I quit, I even called corporate and they found out that he held it.
- Yes, (store manager) told my mother I was fired and told me he put I voluntarily abandoned my job.

#### Wages (6):

- I am now working at a competing convenience store with higher pay and I also feel a lot more comfortable working there.
- A few. Be willing to pay to get some good help. Offer incentives that make up for the lousy wages. The manager isn't using her health insurance. Why couldn't you let assistant manager have it, if it means you would get a good worker, a dependable person? And give you managers seminars on how to treat their employees. (co-worker) would probably go back to Company ABC if she could have the health insurance her family needs.
- The red/blue vest we had to wear is ugly. Pay a little more money to attract desirable workers.
- (store manager) does not advise the company properly. Bad advice- pay your people better it will make you more money in the long run.
- Drive offs, put cameras up, Salary.
- The store needs to improve signs and outside lighting. Also, gas pumps to be more convenient so as to have pay at the pump. I am all about customer service and with these small investments I believe it would bring bigger profits.

#### Physical Store Improvement (5):

- Store needs a lot of updates to equipment as well as repairs to store.
- I think that instead of only having 2 drawers you should have a 3rd one ready to go for shift change.
- I realize at this point in time budget is tight even so preventative maintenance is a must! Our car wash broke down several times.
- The sewer. The store reeked, not to mention legal issues.
- The Company ABC (store) I worked at could have been a lot cleaner, and better organized.

#### Random Issues (13):

- At such a remote location as..., it is scary working alone at night
- My issue is have two people working together, it is kind of scary to work by yourself
- Yes... (then they wrote nothing?)
- "Like something would get done, anyway"
- "Not worth it"
- Yes.. A lot of them
- Yes, the unfair firing
- I think you should start a drug testing program. You have employees that are handling your money that come to work on drugs and alcohol
- "long time employees" know it all but don't politely tell you what's up, but rudely do it.
- Laziness of co workers
- I wanted to take family medical leave and was told I could not.

- If you promised me health insurance you should have given it to me. I quit a job where I had health insurance, which I never would have quit if I knew you didn't have health insurance
- Not allowing overtime and not having vacation pay unless working over 36 hours a week.
- Overworked. Understaffed.

Appendix W: Exit Interview Comments: Do you have any recommendations to make Company ABC a better place to work?

No Answer/Nothing/Good Place to Work (34):

- None
- None
- Nothing
- I loved working there, it was a great job.
- Nothing, it was a good place to work.
- None, it's a great place to work.
- None
- Nothing, actually I loved my job and honestly miss the people as well as my co-workers. (the store manager) is the best because she treats everyone with respect. I admire her greatly!
- It is better already.
- None, it seemed alright to me.
- No! I missed everyone I worked with. They were all like family to me.
- Nothing
- None
- Not change it to any other kind of store, leave it as it is.
- Change back to old things.
- Same.

Management: General Recommendations (15):

- Utilize experience of employees, don't treat them like children.
- Not much, just let (Store Manager) do it.
- Keep Beth around, she is a great boss. Not too easy not too hard.
- Hire people that will cover their shifts and make sure they do their job instead of leaving it for the next shift.
- When in a relationship, employees can't work together!
- That would shouldn't load the workers with too many hours when they don't ask to work and even their week hours.
- I feel that the company itself is a wonder place to work, my own problem was with my former manager and her immaturity and unprofessional way of handling the store at times.
- New employees.
- More structure in the dividing of shift duties. More structure in management and authority.
- Make sure to treat the "little people" respectfully as equals as a person, reward them more often.
- Make it more handicap accessible. And if Sabrina doesn't get fired, at least write her up for reasons alone and how she treats customers.
- If promised something, you should receive it. Better insurance.
- Don't have so many crabby people working there.
- Monitor use of Company ABC bucks of those constantly getting them. At least two others quit for the same reason.

- Make it fun.

#### Management: Need For New (12):

- Better management.
- Find a new manager and a better way to tell your concerns to higher management.
- Find new responsible management.
- I really believe a new manager would be the problem solver. Someone who really cares about the employees and customers.
- That "\*\*\*\*Head" Manager needs to lay off store number 57. He wants it to run like a Super America, which sucks.
- New management.
- Stop cheating your managers/personnel by making their bonuses impossible. Paying too little. Stop listening to Bob. "Bob is too much of a knee jerk!"
- Get rid of the manager.
- Get rid of the gm.
- I would fire (the store manager), there are many past employees at Company ABC down town would agree with me on that issue.
- Get rid of (the store manager). There are a lot of customers that don't like his attitude.
- Deal with (the store manager).

#### Managers: Training (7):

- Train managers to be compassionate and not to discriminate.
- Certain people need to realize that to make Company ABC Team a more enjoyable job, she must treat everyone equal. We need to work together to please the community.
- Thoroughly exam you new managers on how they will run their store!!
- Don't make store 65 the one who always has to train new managers.
- A better manager training program that would start with assistant managers being salaried and bonuses as well. So that they can develop a little more sense of self responsibility in their store and how it performs.
- Have policies about management skills. I know sales ass. Can be written up what about managers? The district managers could work on shipping around their store more and get to know their employees.
- Talk to all managers about respect and learning how to deal with employees equally.

#### Management: Selection (5):

- I would recommend that you look at the qualifications of the Managers and Assistant Managers a little better before hiring them.
- When you hire a manager make sure she is nice and willing to work with you!
- Pay attention to who you hire for management.
- Have policies about management skills. I know sales ass. Can be written up what about managers? The district managers could work on shipping around their store more and get to know their employees.
- Better employees, more screening tests. Letting me know that you put in over 120 hours per pay check. Make sure assistant manager is worth it before putting them into the store.

#### Management: Communication (5):

- If mandatory meetings arise to tell each employee face to face or on the phone. Tape it up because a lot of people don't see it at all.
- More staff meetings.
- Clearly communicate expectations to all employees.
- Make sure the DM spends time with the manager, also don't be afraid to look into an audit crew for shortages instead of employees.
- More communications and reasoning from DM to employees.
- Find a new manager and a better way to tell your concerns to higher management.

#### Physical Store Recommendations (9):

- Newer equipment and floors need help!
- Have a bathroom located inside the store. Both for safety and convenience
- Clean!
- Remove the chili and cheese machine. It was a pain.
- Stools behind the counter so when its not busy we can rest our feet. Lunch break. More regular hours.
- Make hot dog machines easier to clean.
- Putting back items on the counter that are after thought buys. Like lighters and cashews, instead of weird pills. If people cant find them, they wont buy them
- Better uniforms, not those lame vests
- Well, I know that the store is going to be finally switching to scanning items. That will be a huge improvement.

#### Wages (9):

- Pay scale needs to be better - I have 14 yrs in gas station/conv. Store experience and was only making \$7.25/hour - better benefits would help.
- I think, if employees were paid a little better it would be easier to keep them around.
- Stop cheating your managers/personnel by making their bonuses impossible. Paying too little. Stop listening to (store manager). "(store manager) is too much of a knee jerk!"
- Better pay.
- Equal starting rate, no reason for a difference.
- Higher wages.
- Better pay.
- The employees deserve to be paid better than they are.
- Better pay.

#### Benefits/Gas/Food (9):

- I would suggest that they run a little longer shifts, 8-10 hours possibly, with actual breaks, which are required by law, but we never got. A percent off groceries or merchandise in the store, not just gas. Permission to sit once in a while, and not get chewed out for it. And someone to come in at closing to do the actual cleaning, the floors, the machines. That way, the employees can focus on the customers and not be so stressed out, expected to do it all themselves, and keep the cooler stocked and groceries too.

- Increase benefits or find ways to make sure the good, hardworking employees feel appreciated.
- Better discount on gas. The employees get the same discount that the customers get
- Give your employees a reward of some kind to show them appreciation for their work.
- Take better care of your employees. I was the assistant manager and the only benefits I ever received was vacation- nothing else. Full-time gets vacation also.
- A little better incentive.
- I think you should respect your employees that are good and reward them for the job they do. You should take the time to talk to employees to see what the problems are. You lost a good employee!
- A larger gas discount, get cameras on your pumps.
- More benefit opportunities to employees.

#### Two People on shift (6):

- 2 people on at ALL times.
- At least 2 people working per shift. Sometimes there was only 1 person working for 8hrs. It was kind of hard to get everything done. Better management.
- Put 2 people on at all times. There are other gas stations in Winona that are just as busy as us and had as many as 4 on during the day.
- Allowing employees the same rights as customers. Having two people on at the same time. Breaks.
- Maybe have two people on so it would be easier to get dusting and stocking done.
- Maybe having 2 people work same shifts, instead of just one.

#### Scheduling (4):

- Perhaps a larger store crew
- Make sure the store has a minimum number of people and all get the same amount of hours. Have surveys taken
- Vary the schedule instead of all closings and every weekend
- Make the hours less and work on hiring more people in Pipestone so that the schedule isn't packed.

#### Training: Employees (4):

- Certain people need to realize that to make Company ABC Team a more enjoyable job, she must treat everyone equal. We need to work together to please the community.
- A little more explanation on handling coupons instead of guessing and leaving notes and asking questions.
- More training
- The training was horrible, also the rules for everything should be the same for everyone.

## Appendix X: Exit Interview: Could Termination Have Been Prevented?

### Store Manager (22):

- The manager and assistant manager need to learn a little more about managing.
- Had the manager not decided to use me to take out all her frustrations. Had she not told customers I visited with them to avoid working. Had she not given me a bad review because I forgot to stock the coolers once, or didn't empty the half full garages outside because I was sick and didn't want to call her to work for me. Had we had enough help so as not to feel overburdened with chores, or had a few less chores to do. The one time she gave me a bad review, she dredged up things I'd done in the beginning of employment there, where you are expected to make mistakes, and used them as reasons for the bad review. But in the year I worked there, I came to work when scheduled and didn't complain about it. I did what was asked of me and more. Some of my fellow employees actually requested that they work after me because they didn't have to do anything once they got there, because it was already done for them, by me.
- By giving reasons why I had no more hours and talk to employees more.
- Tell other co-workers to do their job so when I get there I don't get loaded with their work.
- The new manager could have informed everyone of his plan. The people he has hired are not pleasing to current customers and are leaving Company ABC.
- If Joe had done a 3 month review with me I would have known what to improve on. Everyone got a review but me.
- Have a constant manager. Promote employees; don't keep bringing in new people for manager positions.
- Management needs to show more respect to their employees, including store managers.
- Management with more knowledge and company moral.
- Different management.
- Having a dm that wouldn't be afraid to help you if needed.
- I could have been called back to work after letting the person in charge know I was back, at least something saying they didn't need me.
- If my boss wasn't just out to get me.
- Have more than one person working.
- More time to get used to the store and working on a set schedule.
- Better manager.
- Communication between employees and management, I had 2 warnings. The first for being late and then termination. Not fair.
- The manager not hiring people after giving me the job.
- She could have told me what I was doing wrong instead of terminating me, I really enjoyed my job.
- I could have been told that asking people to work meant I wouldn't have a job.
- Store Manager was a jerk.
- Better pay, better management.

### Better Pay (11):

- Higher pay!
- Pay me a lot more.

- A fat pay check.
- More pay and different management.
- Pay raise.
- Yes, but there is no way you would be able to pay me the amount and give me 60 hours a week like the construction does over the summer.
- Raises.
- Pay raise, less BS.
- Pay.
- Higher pay!
- Better pay, better management.

#### Hours (10):

- By giving reasons why I had no more hours and talk to employees more.
- Give me insurance and more hours for the store.
- I quit for the record because I was expected to stay when I was just filling in for a couple hours.
- More hours.
- Yes, but there is no way you would be able to pay me the amount and give me 60 hours a week like the construction does over the summer.
- More hours, less BS.
- Give me hours if I asked for more like I did.
- If they would have not cut my pay and my hours all because I got sick is wrong.
- Give me the hours I was promised when I started.
- Not having my hours cut.

#### Given Respect (8):

- If apologized to.
- To be respected as a valued employee that valued my job very much.
- Management needs to show more respect to their employees, including store managers.
- Fire the gm and hire someone who has respect and is understanding.
- If I had been shown a little more appreciation, paid a little more, or if my co-workers behaved a little differently.
- More training and respect.
- I was treated like dirt and threatened withholding my check.
- I went to jail for 2 days for a DUI and another employee went to jail for warrants for a week and still had her job.

#### No Opportunity For Advancement (4):

- Given the opportunity for advancement.
- An opportunity to manage my own store.
- If there were Company ABC's where I go to school I would have applied.
- I feel like I couldn't make a career out of it. It was one of my most favorable jobs though. I enjoyed the people.