

Prejudice Against Older Job Seekers:  
Additional Information in Résumés  
As a Means of Avoiding Bias

Patricia E. Henderson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of a  
Master of Arts degree

Psychology Department  
University of Manitoba

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN RESUMES AS A  
MEANS OF AVOIDING BIAS

BY

PATRICIA E. HENDERSON

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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## Abstract

Older job seekers often experience prejudice in job selection (Doering, Rhodes, & Schuster, 1983). Festinger's (1957) Theory of Cognitive Dissonance claims that negative bias is resistant to additional information. Studies by Lee and Clemons (1985) and Locke-Connor and Walsh (1980) have found otherwise. Based on these studies, it was hypothesized that younger applicants would be assessed more favourably than older ones if standard résumés were used, and that given résumés containing additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes, mature applicants, and especially males, would be assessed more favorably than mature candidates with standard résumés. A role play scenario and questionnaire with one of eight versions of a résumé enclosed was given to 434 undergraduate students. Résumés manipulated gender (male or female), age (25 or 55), and type of résumé (standard or additional information). At the alpha .0166 level, orthogonal contrasts found some significant age differences given standard résumés, and many significant differences between mature candidates based on the type of résumé used. Only one significant gender difference was found. It may be that additional information in a résumé contradicting common negative stereotypes allows respondents to consider the applicant as an individual separate and different from the target group.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	x
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Defining Older Workers.....	2
Unemployment Statistics on Older Workers.....	3
Employer Prejudice.....	5
Defining Prejudice and Discrimination.....	6
Prejudice as an Attitude.....	7
Employer Beliefs Regarding Mature Job Seekers.....	9
Accuracy of These Stereotypes.....	10
Other Factors Contributing to Negative Bias.....	15
Discrimination and Periods of High Unemployment.....	17
Age at Which Discrimination Occurs.....	17
Bias Against Older Female Job Applicants.....	18
Legislation as a Means of Curbing Discrimination.....	21
Other Proposed Solutions.....	25
How Preconceptions Are Maintained According	

to Cognitive Dissonance Theory.....	28
Predicting Discrimination on the Basis of	
Prejudice.....	31
Studies That Do Not Support the Existence of	
Ageism.....	34
Summary of the Literature Review.....	41
Discussion of the Literature Review and	
Deduction of the Hypotheses.....	45
Hypotheses.....	48
METHODOLOGY.....	49
Subjects.....	49
Procedure.....	49
RESULTS.....	55
Descriptive Statistics.....	57
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Test	68
Hartley's F Max Test.....	69
Orthogonal Contrasts.....	71
Analysis of Variance.....	77
DISCUSSION.....	91
Hypothesis 1.....	92
Hypothesis 2.....	95
Hypothesis 3.....	97
Directions for Future Research.....	98
Theoretical and Practical Relevance of These	
Findings.....	101

REFERENCES.....	104
APPENDICES.....	116



## LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
1. Characteristics of the Job Applicants in Each of the Eight Experimental Conditions.....	53
2. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in Experimental Condition 1.....	58
3. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in Experimental Condition 2.....	59
4. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in Experimental Condition 3.....	60
5. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in Experimental Condition 4.....	61
6. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in Experimental Condition 5.....	62
7. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in Experimental Condition 6.....	63
8. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in	

Experimental Condition 7.....	64
9. Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis for the Dependent Variables in Experimental Condition 8.....	65
10. Low and High Means Among the Experimental Conditions for Each Dependent Variable.....	67
11. Results of Orthogonal Contrast Testing Hypothesis 1.....	73
12. Results of Orthogonal Contrast Testing Hypothesis 2.....	74
13. Results of Orthogonal Contrast Testing Hypothesis 3.....	75
14. Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Likelihood of interviewing.....	78
15. Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Overall Suitability.....	79
16. Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Trainability.....	80
17. Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Education.....	81
18. Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Skills.....	82
19. Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Previous Experience.....	83
20. Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Physical Condition.....	84

21.	Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Flexibility.....	85
22.	Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Age of Applicant.....	86
23.	Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Motivation.....	87
24.	Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Intelligence.....	88
25.	Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance on Creativity.....	89

## LIST OF APPENDICES

	<u>Page</u>
A. Subjects' Rights.....	116
B. Instructions.....	117
C. Newspaper Advertisement.....	120
D. Job Description.....	121
E. Further Instructions.....	122
F. Résumé for Condition 1.....	123
G. Résumé for Condition 2.....	125
H. Résumé for Condition 3.....	127
I. Résumé for Condition 4.....	129
J. Résumé for Condition 5.....	131
K. Résumé for Condition 6.....	134
L. Résumé for Condition 7.....	137
M. Résumé for Condition 8.....	140
N. Questionnaire.....	143

## INTRODUCTION

Much of the research on older age groups supports the finding that older individuals are often the subject of negative attitudes and discrimination (Banziger & Drevenstedt, 1982; Botwinick, 1984; Doering, Rhodes, & Schuster, 1983; Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Palmore, 1982; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). The term "ageism" has been coined to express this bias. The Canadian Governmental Report on Aging describes "ageism" as "attitudes that reflect a systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against older citizens simply because they are old" (Government of Canada, 1982, p. 12). This bias includes prejudice and unequal treatment in the labour market because of age (Mowseian, 1986; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). The present study focusses on one aspect of labour market bias--employer prejudice in the reemployment of mature workers. Festinger's (1957) Theory of Cognitive Dissonance explains why negative attitudes--including those held against older workers--are resistant to change. According to this theory, when individuals perceive some of their cognitions (thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours) to be incompatible with other cognitions that they hold, they will interpret and remember subsequent information in ways that fit and support the original bias, thereby protecting and confirming the original preconceptions. Incidents of discrimination against older persons detailed in the

literature seem consistent with this theory (Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). Notwithstanding, there are some studies that do not uphold findings of bias given certain circumstances (Lee & Clemons, 1985; Locke-Connor & Walsh, 1980).

Based on these latter studies, the present thesis investigates résumés containing additional positive information contradicting common negative stereotypes as a means whereby older job applicants could avoid bias. It was hypothesized that older job applicants would be assessed as more suitable for a position and more likely to be invited for a job interview when they incorporated additional positive information into their résumés than when they did not.

#### Defining Older Workers

Throughout the literature, definitional inconsistencies occur in the use of the terms "middle-aged," "older", and "mature" (Atchley, 1980; Davis, 1981; Fiske, 1980; Perun & Bielby, 1979; Shaw & Shaw, 1988; Thomas & Robbins, 1979). Membership in the above age groupings is not restricted to individuals of specific ages. For example, the United States Department of Labour defines a "mature worker" as any employee aged 45 or over (Atchley, 1980); the Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council (1985) defines an older worker as one between 45 and 64 years of age; and Davis (1981) says that most researchers consider mid-life years as occurring

between the ages of 40 and 65. Studies on older workers use subjects of varying ages (eg., Gray, 1983; Quinn, 1979). Furthermore, it is widely recognized that there exists a large diversity among older individuals, even among those of the same age (Mowseian, 1986). With these various age groupings and marked differences among older persons, caution must be exercised in comparing studies on older workers or generalizing results to avoid inappropriate conclusions (Botwinick, 1984).

#### Unemployment Statistics on Older Workers

There are many reasons why mature workers become unemployed. These include among others, technological change, plant closings, company reorganizations, mass layoffs, mandatory retirement from the armed forces at an early age, and mid-life career changes (Atchley, 1980; Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Gordus, Jarley & Ferman, 1981; Gray, 1983; Kunin, 1983; McPherson, 1980; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985; Sheppard, 1976). Once out of a job, mature job seekers experience difficulty regaining suitable employment. This may not be immediately apparent if the unemployment situation is assessed solely by the unemployment rate. Other factors including duration of joblessness must also be considered.

Older workers enjoy a relatively low unemployment rate (Casey & Bruche, 1983; Kunin, 1983; Soumerai & Avorn, 1983). For example, as of the end of February, 1990, the average unemployment rate in Manitoba for the previous

twelve month period, for the total population aged 15 years and older was 7.4% actual (i.e., unadjusted for seasonal variations). For the same period, the average unemployment rate for workers aged 45 to 64 years of age was 5.3% actual (Employment & Immigration Canada [EIC], 1990; Statistics Canada, 1990). There is a tendency for unemployment rates to fall as ages increase (Kunin, 1983; MacDougall, 1983). In fact, labour force members aged 45 to 64 enjoy the lowest joblessness rates of all age groups (EIC, 1990). These figures, however, do not reflect the actual unemployment rates of older adults (Canada Employment & Immigration, 1985). To be counted as unemployed in Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey, a person must be both out of work and actively seeking employment. Therefore, these figures do not include those people working part-time because they could not find full-time employment and older workers fill a disproportionate number of part-time positions (Government of Canada, 1983; Sheppard, 1976; Social Planning Council, 1982). Nor do they include discouraged workers (Shaw & Shaw, 1988; Statistics Canada, 1988). Sheppard (1976) refers to these as the "hidden unemployed...primarily made up of persons disproportionately older who have not actively sought employment in a given time period, although they had been looking prior to that period and would accept employment if offered" (p. 298).

Mature job seekers usually face a duration of



joblessness that exceeds that of other age groups (Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; Government of Canada, 1983). For example, in Canada, as of the end of February, 1990 older workers aged 45 years and older remained unemployed an average of 22.6 weeks compared to the 17.3 week average for workers of all ages. The situation was especially bleak for male workers in this age group. Their average duration of joblessness was 23.8 weeks (Statistics Canada, 1990). As is the case with unemployment rates, figures on duration of joblessness understate the actual situation for mature workers. Duration is calculated for those unemployed and actively seeking work. A number of older workers discouraged by their lengthy unemployment discontinue their job searches although they would accept employment if it were offered to them. Including these workers in the calculation would greatly increase the average duration of unemployment for older workers.

#### Employer Prejudice

An important contributing factor to the unemployment difficulties experienced by middle-aged and older job applicants is employer prejudice. There is considerable evidence of bias against mature workers in employment selection (Connor, Walsh, Litzleman, & Alvarez, 1978; Doering et al., 1983; Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Locke-Connor & Walsh, 1980; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985; Social Planning Council, 1982). This may entail bypassing mature workers for positions for which they are qualified; hiring older

workers for only certain lower-level positions (Atchley, 1980; Fiske, 1980; Gray, 1983); or paying mature workers lower wages than their qualifications and experience merit, solely because of their age (Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; Davis, 1981; Quinn, 1979; Soumerai & Avorn, 1983; Wanner & McDonald, 1983). Of course, lower wages for some mature individuals may be explained by reasons other than discrimination. Mature workers in the work force today generally do not have as much education or formal vocational training as younger counterparts (Botwinick, 1984). And with a new employer, an employee may have to start at the bottom of the wage structure and once more work his or her way up (Gordus et al., 1981; Shaw & Shaw, 1988). The present thesis focusses solely on the bypassing of older job applicants for reasons of prejudice.

#### Defining Prejudice and Discrimination

The terms prejudice and discrimination are not defined or used consistently in the literature. Some studies and reviews are based on legal definitions or applications. These often consider the purpose or effect of differentiating measures in determining whether or not there is discrimination (Abella, 1984; Department of Justice Canada, 1986; Ledvinka, 1982; Taub, 1985; Van Dyke, 1985). Other studies refer to dictionary or common usage formulations (Erlich, 1973; Myers, 1983). Among the latter, the main difference is between those who include thought and action in their definition of discrimination

(Tarnopolsky, 1980) and those who separate thought from action, attributing thought to prejudice and reserving the term discrimination for behaviour only (e.g., Myers, 1983; Robertson, 1977). The researcher's discipline or the perspective from which the bias is being investigated may qualify and modify the definitions (Erlich, 1973). What is understood to constitute prejudice and discrimination may also change as a factor of time, information, experience, and insight (Abella, 1984; Department of Justice Canada, 1986).

This present thesis uses the definitions for prejudice and discrimination provided by Myers (1983). He describes prejudice as "an unjustifiable negative attitude toward a group and its individual members" (p. 431). Discrimination is defined as an "unjustifiable negative behaviour toward a group and its members" (p. 421). These definitions are similar to those suggested by Deaux and Wrightsman (1984).

#### Prejudice as an Attitude

Prejudice is an unjustifiable negative attitude. According to Erlich (1973), "an attitude is an interrelated set of propositions about an object or a class of objects which are organized around cognitive, behavioural, and affective dimensions" (p. 4). Attitudes can be regarded as systems. Once established, they are stable and enduring (Lawless, 1979).

The cognitive component of an attitude consists of the beliefs or opinions a person holds about an idea, an

object, or a class of objects (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1984). In terms of prejudice, these are generally negative stereotypic beliefs (Robertson, 1977). A stereotype is a generalization - a rigid, widely held attribution to an identifiable category of people of fixed traits, characteristics, and behaviours (Myers, 1983). Stereotypes may be positive or negative, and may or may not support prejudice (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1984). Generalization of itself may be beneficial in helping to simplify a complex world. Categorizing and organizing objects into groups can reduce the amount of information that has to be considered at any given time (Lawless, 1979). However, negative categorizations or stereotypes that are inaccurate, overgeneralized, and resistant to disconfirmation may foster prejudicial feelings (Myers, 1983).

Feelings comprise the affective component of an attitude, that is, the emotional state connected with the cognitions or attitude object (Myers, 1983). Prejudicial feelings tend to be negative, although the intensity of affect experienced varies. For example, the importance of the belief to the individual holding it; the extent or degree to which the belief is thought to characterize an object or class of objects; and the evaluation a person makes of how unfavourable or bad that belief is, may all influence a person's feelings in relation to the beliefs and toward the object of prejudice (Erlich, 1973).

The behavioural tendency of an attitude refers to the

predisposition or inclination to act or respond in a specific way toward the attitude object (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1984; Erlich, 1973; Myers, 1983). The behavioural tendency of prejudice is the predisposition to act or respond in an unjustifiably negative manner toward a person or a group of persons, that is, as the tendency to discriminate.

#### Employer Beliefs Regarding Mature Job Seekers

Negative attitudes toward older workers often involve common negative stereotypes (Wigdor & Foot, 1988). For example, there seems to be a fairly widespread belief among employers that older workers suffer progressive declines in physical abilities and well-being as they age, thus reducing their competence to perform required work duties (Banziger & Drevenstedt, 1982; Doering et al., 1983; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). Another common stereotype concerns decreasing mental ability. Intelligence, memory, learning ability, and problem-solving capability are all thought to decline with age (Doering et al., 1983; Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Hartford, 1981). When managers have a choice of hiring either young people or older workers, all equally competent, the preference is often for hiring the young (Casey & Bruche, 1983; Government of Canada, 1982). This is especially the case for positions requiring the worker to learn a new and complex skill or to acquire detailed knowledge (Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Mowlesian, 1986). Not only are older workers perceived as being unable to learn

the new skills or new technology as easily as younger workers, they are also considered to have less potential for development (Gordus et al., 1981; Mowlesian, 1986). Older employees are thought to be less interested in learning than their younger counterparts (Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Mowlesian, 1986). Furthermore, they are considered more rigid than younger workers and less creative or astute in facing new challenges and in problem-solving (Government of Canada, 1982; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). They are generally considered to be less productive (Government of Canada, 1982; Hartford, 1981).

#### Accuracy of These Stereotypes

The accuracy of some of the negative stereotypes applied to older workers is still a matter of controversy in the literature. While some researchers contend that there is a basis for some or all of these generalizations, many others do not agree, or agree only partially.

One of the difficulties is the problem of distinguishing age, period, and cohort effects (Botwinick, 1984; Shaw & Shaw, 1988). For example, it has been argued that some age differences may reflect educational or other cultural differences between generations rather than physiological or psychological effects of aging (Botwinick, 1984; Mowlesian, 1986; Wigdor & Foot, 1988). This problem is largely a methodological one. Most studies on aging are cross-sectional, as this type of study is easier and cheaper to carry out than are longitudinal studies.

Botwinick (1984) contends, however, that longitudinal investigation is the only methodology sufficient for charting age changes as opposed to age differences.

Most researchers also point to the wide diversity that exists among older people (Mowlesian, 1986; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985; Wigdor & Foot, 1988). Hereditary factors help determine how a person ages, and so do activities pursued over the course of a lifetime. The latter greatly influence whether specific abilities increase, decrease, or remain stable. In this respect, what a person has been doing during his or her life may matter more than the chronological age of that person (Mowlesian, 1986; Wigdor & Foot, 1988). Attitudes and emotional states may also contribute to individual differences. For example, some gerontologists claim that there exist marked differences in aging between persons who perceive control over their lives and those who do not (Gelman, 1982). Stereotypes ignore these individual differences. And employers may have a tendency to deal with stereotypes (Mowlesian, 1986; Sheppard, 1976). For example, older people as a group are generally perceived to be suffering from declines in capacities and health. Employers may not distinguish one older job seeker from the stereotyped age group he/she belongs to, and therefore have generalized expectations of capacity declines in anyone belonging to this group.

There are also researchers who accept some declines as factual but irrelevant to actual job requirements. This

argument will be considered in more detail in a moment when the veracity of specific stereotypes is assessed.

In general, however, although the controversy remains, there seems to be ample support for the position that many of the negative stereotypes are unfounded (Gelman, 1982; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985).

Let us now consider specific stereotypes, beginning with those concerning the physical well-being of mature workers. Although some older people may suffer from physical declines, many others today still enjoy vitality and stamina due to advances and improvements in lifestyle, the treatment of disease and injuries, diet, and opportunities for physical exercise (Mowlesian, 1986; Wigdor & Foot, 1988). According to an article by Gelman (1982) in Newsweek magazine, "not only are Americans living longer, they are staying active longer--and their worst enemy is not nature, but the myths and prejudices about growing old" (p. 56). The vast majority of workers, including older workers, do not have rigorous physical demands placed on them by their jobs. Mechanization and automation have greatly changed the nature of work resulting in many jobs being less demanding than in past decades (Chen, 1987). In fact, a recent U.S. Department of Labour study indicates that only 14% of jobs in industry today require much physical strength (Mowlesian, 1986).

A second popular stereotype concerns mental well-being. There is some evidence that intellectual activity



is not negatively correlated with age (Mowseian, 1986; Wigdor & Foot, 1988). When intellectual tests stress accuracy rather than speed, older people do not score lower than younger ones in many of the areas of intellectual functioning, including numerical abilities and verbal comprehension (Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). Some experts in aging even claim that cognitive powers may increase with age and experience. As explained by James Birren, "while the younger brain handles large quantities of 'bits' of information more rapidly, the mature brain more readily processes 'chunks'--that is, it forms concepts based on its greater store of bits" (Gelman, 1982, p. 58). Nonetheless, as pointed out by researchers and psychiatrists, forgetfulness and other cognitive lapses are often interpreted as a sign of mental decline in mature individuals but not in younger persons (Mowseian, 1986).

While it is conceded that for some, cognitive abilities including problem-solving, learning, and thought processes may decline to a point that would interfere with certain work duties, this is not true of all, or even most, older individuals. By sensationalizing Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia, the media may be at least partly responsible for perpetuating the impression of mental impairment in general in older persons. The reality is that, at any given time, only 5% to 10% of the elderly population experiences mental impairment (Mowseian, 1986; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985).

Adult education may prove to be the vehicle for finally putting to rest negative generalizations concerning the ability of mature adults to learn. Adult education is becoming increasingly popular and many of the students successfully completing courses are older individuals (Wigdor & Foot, 1988).

In so far as productivity is concerned, Mowesian (1986) maintains that over the past few decades, research from such varied disciplines as economics, history, medicine, psychology, and sociology, among others have seriously challenged the myth of the nonproductive potential of older workers. Rosen and Jerdee (1985) concur. Although it is generally accepted that response time and speed and accuracy of movement tend to decrease with age (Gelman, 1982), the degree of decline over time varies. And a slowing in reaction time does not necessarily mean that an older worker's rate of productivity will be slower than that of a younger person. Familiarity with the task, experience in how to perform it effectively and efficiently, as well as good judgement may all compensate for slower reaction time (Wigdor & Foot, 1988). For example, older workers in paraprofessional and clerical jobs have been shown to outperform younger workers (Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). Moreover, automation has caused many past forms of productivity to become obsolete or less important (Mowesian, 1986). A further consideration is the fact that mature employees tend to have less

absenteeism and turnover than younger ones (Wigdor & Foot, 1988). The motivation to learn and to work hard may be influenced by personal relationships and corporate culture more than by chronological age (Wigdor & Foot, 1986).

Rigidity in thought and job performance is another common stereotype disputed by Rosen and Jerdee (1985) who claim that rigidity is unrelated to age. They point to the fact that many well-respected scholars, artists, and writers receive their highest awards and recognition for creative work done at an advanced age (Rosen & Jerdee, 1985).

#### Other Factors Contributing to Negative Bias

Employers may be negatively influenced toward older workers by considerations other than stereotypes. Mature workers may be perceived as "poor investments". These individuals do not have the same number of potential years to work for an employer as do younger persons. All the while, they may be costly in terms of pension contributions and accident coverage rates (Botwinick, 1984; Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; Nishio & Lank, 1987). Ironically, union-negotiated benefits may hurt older job seekers as much as do negative attitudes. The cost of pension and medical benefits may make the older worker less attractive to a potential employer.

Some employers may view older workers as vying for jobs that should more rightly be given to younger adults with greater family responsibilities (Harris & Associates,

1978). Still other companies may feel under pressure to hire youth, women, disabled persons, or members of a minority group. Thus jobs applied for by older male workers may go to these other target groups instead (Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). For example, the federal government's Employment Equity program mandates the hiring of women, aboriginal peoples, disabled persons, and visible minorities by specified private sector employers in certain circumstances (EIC, 1986). Employers have also been encouraged to hire these same target groups to be eligible for government subsidies under the federal-provincial Canadian Jobs Strategy (CJS) -- a multi-million dollar job-creation and training program (EIC & Department of Economic Security, 1989). Such programs may have unwittingly helped to exclude mature workers, and especially male mature workers, from positions which they might have obtained had other target groups not been subsidized and promoted.

Government attitudes toward older workers may have influenced both private and public sector employers. Until very recently, our federal and provincial governments pursued almost exclusively the passive approach of providing older persons with opportunities for retirement rather than work (Casey & Bruche, 1983). This is slowly changing. The Manitoba government has now passed legislation prohibiting compulsory retirement at age 65 (Manitoba Human Rights Commission, 1984). And both levels

of government are becoming increasingly aware of the need to assist older job seekers. In the Canadian Jobs Strategy program discussed earlier, one program option has just been developed specifically for this purpose. It is not yet in use in Manitoba, however. Also encouraging is the research being conducted at this time by the Task Force on Programs for Older Workers. Their mandate is to examine problems experienced by older job seekers in finding reemployment and to recommend ways of assisting these individuals (Colosimo, DeLaurentiis, Lafleur, McCarthy, Norton, Pepin, & Riche, 1990).

#### Discrimination and Periods of High Unemployment

There seems to be a positive correlation between age discrimination in the selection of employees and periods of high unemployment. According to McPherson (1980), negative myths about incompetence and declining productivity in older workers "appear more frequently during periods of high unemployment when there is intense competition for fewer jobs" (p. 376). There is support for this position from Casey and Bruche (1983) and from the Ontario Human Rights Commission. This organization claims that in times of high unemployment and a tight economy, employers tend to select job applicants on the basis of physical attributes rather than merit (Social Planning Council, 1982).

#### Age at Which Discrimination Occurs

Stereotyping and discrimination are not reserved solely for those aged 65 and over. Workers between the

ages of 35 and 45 may begin to experience discrimination that increases progressively as they age (Botwinick, 1984; Casey & Bruche, 1983; Fiske, 1980). By the time employees are aged 55 years old and older, this discrimination will have considerably worsened (Axelbank, 1972). In the United States, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) recognizes the precarious situation facing middle-aged, as well as older workers. Its clauses protect workers from the ages of 40 to 70 years old from any employment-related discrimination on the basis of age (Casey & Bruche, 1983; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985).

#### Bias Against Older Female Job Applicants

Thus far in our discussion of bias against mature workers, we have not differentiated between the sexes. Most of the available studies focus on males; research data on older female workers is still scarce (Fuller & Martin, 1980; Shaw & Shaw, 1988). This is despite the fact that labour force participation rates of females aged 45 and over have increased significantly during the last decade whereas labour force participation rates of older male workers have declined (Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; Government of Canada, 1983; Quereshi & Kay, 1986; Shaw & Shaw, 1988).

Discrimination in the labour market against female job applicants of all ages has been documented mainly in pre-employment (Wrightsmann & Deaux, 1981) and in employment selection and occupational distribution (Jonung, 1986;

Schmid, 1986). The few studies that do exist on mature female workers support these findings (Wrightsmann & Deaux, 1981). In each of these areas, older women experience more bias than younger women or mature men. In fact, women have been depicted as being subject to a double devaluation - sexism compounded by ageism (Fuller & Martin, 1980; Mowseian, 1986; Nishio & Lank, 1987; Payne and Whittington, 1980). As one social scientist has stated, "in a tight job market, only the exceptional woman will break through the combined barrier of age and sex" (Fuller & Martin, 1980, p. 32).

In many instances, bias against mature female job applicants begins with pre-employment discrimination. These are biases that affect female choices or opportunities prior to their entering the labour force (Wrightsmann & Deaux, 1981). For example, society's assumption that a woman's main responsibility is to take care of the home and family has reduced schooling opportunities for many women. This has been the case especially for older females (Nishio & Lank, 1987; Shaw & Shaw, 1988). During the years that they were obtaining their education, school systems were generally structured to prepare boys for trades and careers, and girls for domestic responsibilities and lower-level short-term jobs. Boys were encouraged to further their education. Girls were dissuaded from doing so, as they were expected to marry and stay at home with their children. Consequently,

many mature females in the work force today have less education than both males their age and younger females, and education is closely linked to labour market opportunities (Shaw & Shaw, 1988; Sheppard, 1976).

Mature women are also subjected to bias in employment selection and occupational distribution. Duration of unemployment for female job seekers aged 45 years of age and over generally exceeds that of females aged 15 to 44 years old (Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; Statistics Canada, 1990). In addition, in most areas, older females are less likely to be hired for a position than similarly qualified male applicants (Almquist, 1979), or the qualifications demanded of them may be higher than for males (Jonung, 1986). And when mature women are hired for a position, they tend to be paid less than their male counterparts. This is true even when qualifications and time in the work force are kept constant (Almquist, 1979).

Women in general experience limited access to numerous occupations. Since mechanization and automation have greatly decreased the requirements for physical strength in many jobs, the continued exclusion of women from these is likely attributable, at least in part, to discrimination (Chen, 1987). Older females, especially, are subject to occupational restrictions. They tend to be hired for low-paying "women's jobs" such as clerical, domestic, and food service employment, or for positions in health care, social work, and education (Jonung, 1986; Schmid, 1986).



In the main, they are concentrated in service jobs while older men occupy managerial positions (Chen, 1987; Government of Canada, 1983). Their representation is minimal in nearly all professional and prestigious occupations (Shaw & Shaw, 1988; Wrightsman & Deaux, 1981). Not surprisingly, salary differences between men and women are greatest among mature workers (Doering et al., 1983). Nishio and Lank (1987) place older women among those who populate the "secondary" labour market--labour intensive, nonunionized, and low in wages.

#### Legislation as a Means of Curbing Discrimination

Over the last few years, several important pieces of legislation have been introduced in Canada and in the United States prohibiting discrimination against older persons in employment situations. The first of these to be enacted, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) referred to earlier, was passed in the United States in 1967 and amended in 1978. It protects workers aged 40 years to 70 years from all employment-related discrimination based on age (Casey & Bruche, 1983; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). In Canada, Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees every individual the right to equality without discrimination (Abella, 1984). In the Charter, age is identified as a prohibited ground for discrimination but specific areas such as employment are not mentioned per se. Instead, this legislation is open-ended. It applies to all laws and all

spheres of government activity. Employment is covered insofar as federal laws and federal activity are concerned. The Charter does not apply to the private sector, however. That is the domain of the Canadian Human Rights Act. This piece of legislation overlaps the Charter in relation to federal government activities, but focusses primarily on private persons at the federal level. The Act applies to only a limited number of specific areas, of which employment is one. It prohibits employment-related discrimination on the basis of age but still allows for mandatory retirement of employees who have reached the "normal age of retirement" for their occupation. This provision is currently under examination and its abolition is expected shortly (Department of Justice Canada, 1986). Provincially, the Manitoba Human Rights Act outlaws discrimination in employment on the basis of age. Mandatory retirement has been recently added to this enactment's list of proscribed actions (Manitoba Human Rights Commission, 1984).

The long-term effect of these changes in law are still unknown. Prior to legislation, older workers were the target of frequent and obvious negative bias. Legislation may have curbed much of this. On the other hand, there seems to be ample evidence that discrimination still exists today; it may just be that it is more subtle and more covert than before (Botwinick, 1984; Myers, 1983; Hartman, 1980). Legislation may have merely arbitrarily defined who

was and was not old (Mowseian, 1986).

Consider the experience of the United States with ADEA. Interestingly, it appears that discrimination claims and cases brought under ADEA have actually increased rather significantly in the last few years instead of decreasing (Brandon & Snyder, 1985; Casey & Bruche, 1983). The most frequent issue for which employers have been prosecuted under ADEA has been for discriminatory termination. This act has not been as successful in addressing bias in hiring. In fact, age discrimination legislation may have made matters worse for the unemployed worker (Casey & Bruche, 1983; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). By increasing job security for those already employed, dismissal of mature workers has become more difficult than in the past. Therefore, employers may not be as willing to risk hiring them in the first place (Casey & Bruche, 1983).

Canadian legislation does not appear to have been more successful. One reason may be that enactments such as the Canadian and Manitoba Human Rights Acts and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms have by and large addressed only individual allegations of bias and cases of intentional discrimination. They are not sufficient, therefore, for dealing with the subtlety and pervasiveness of the problem (Abella, 1984; Tarnopolsky, 1980).

And there still exist simple means by which employers and personnel managers can circumvent legislation, should they wish to do so. For example, mandatory educational

levels in hiring help to screen out older individuals as these workers are generally less well educated than their younger counterparts (Nishio & Lank, 1987). In many instances, the level of education required is superfluous for the job (Gordus et al., 1981); and relying solely on education-based credentials while ignoring experience and job performance discriminates against older people (Mowseian, 1986). Employers may also make geographic mobility a requirement of the job, forcing employees to relocate periodically. Older workers are more established with more responsibilities in a community than younger workers. Thus, they are less likely to apply for these positions (Nishio & Lank, 1987). Another means of circumventing legislation is found primarily in the public sector. Government boards tasked with selecting the most suitable candidate for a position do so by means of a standard evaluation process. All applicants are asked the same questions and marks are awarded for the answers. The candidate with the highest score is hired. However, these boards have been allocating an increasing percentage of the total interview marks to a factor called "personal suitability". This indefinable factor involves almost completely subjective judgement, and so has the potential for harbouring undisclosed personal prejudice. Yet in many cases, it is the final deciding factor in selecting or rejecting a candidate (Carson, 1980).

Similar problems prevent mature female workers from

greatly benefitting from legislation prohibiting gender-related inequalities in employment. Generally, this legislation does not appear to have been notably successful in helping women of any age. To be effective, these laws would require vigorous enforcement, something that governments usually do not provide in a weakened economy (Braun, 1986). As well, there are serious limitations to existing laws against gender-related discrimination and especially to legislation prescribing equal pay for work of equal value (Jonung, 1986; Schmid, 1986). Ironically, as is the case with age discrimination legislation, it seems that laws introduced to improve matters for women in one area of employment, such as wages or arbitrary dismissal, can reduce the opportunities for women in a different area such as employment selection by making employers leary of hiring women in the first place (Jonung, 1986).

#### Other Proposed Solutions.

In addition to legislation, other proposed solutions for reducing bias against mature workers in employment include education (Clark, 1980), "awareness sessions" (Tucker, 1980), affirmative action and employment equity programs (EIC, 1986), and the collective bargaining process (Clark, 1980). Advocates of education have suggested combatting unfounded myths by means of special programs in schools and institutions and educating the public through the media. But education has been criticized as being an unreliable agent of change, "glacially slow in movement and

impact, and often completely ineffective in the face of intractable views" (Abella, 1984, p. 8). "Awareness sessions" are workshops, generally based on the assumption that access to facts and the opportunity to meet members of a minority group can make a difference. For example, the Royal Bank of Canada offers "awareness sessions" in an attempt to sensitize management to the issues of equal employment opportunities for women. Tucker (1980), representative for the Royal Bank at a conference on race and sex equality in the workplace, makes it clear that such sessions do not aim at changing attitudes. Rather they merely encourage learning and attempt to broaden the perspective from which participants make their decisions. Employment equity and affirmative action refer to programs that attempt to ensure equal opportunities in the workplace for specified groups deemed to have been unfairly treated in the past. They are used to varying degrees by both government and private industry. In the case of affirmative action, this is often accomplished by instituting differential and preferential measures for advancing the representation of target groups in areas of the work force and workplace where they are currently underrepresented. Employment equity policies function mainly to raise the target group's qualifications for entry into the labour market (Jackson, 1986). These programs address primarily systemic discrimination (Abella, 1984). Most affirmative action and employment equity programs in

Manitoba do not include older workers as a target group for assistance (EIC, 1986). Although women are usually targeted, researchers are still divided on how successful these initiatives have been in improving labour market opportunities for them (Schmid, 1986). Finally, the collective bargaining process may be a promising tool for the future. In today's economic climate, however, with high unemployment and low job security, unions are not likely to have the kind of leeway required for successfully using the bargaining process to address inequalities in employment (Clark, 1980).

Despite these interventions, ageism in the workplace remains today, as evidenced by the American experience with ADEA, the fact that older workers remain unemployed longer than their younger counterparts, and the findings of some recent investigations on older workers (Casey & Bruche, 1983; Doering et al., 1983; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985; Wigdor & Foot, 1988). This bias is very difficult to prove today in light of its unlawfulness. Employers are not likely to admit openly to unequal treatment of applicants. They may be wary of even expressing negative feelings on the subject of older workers despite their having such feelings.

Why does ageism continue to operate in employment selection today, despite mounting evidence that negative stereotypes about older workers are unfounded (Rosen & Jerdee, 1985) and despite interventions such as legislation, education, affirmative action, and others?

Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance Theory offers one plausible explanation.

How Preconceptions Are Maintained According to Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Festinger's (1957) Theory of Cognitive Dissonance explains how biases are maintained, once established. In this theory, cognitions refer to thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours of which the person is cognitively aware. Festinger describes the relationship among cognitions as one of consonance, dissonance, or irrelevance. Cognitive dissonance occurs when the individual discerns incongruity among cognitions. When cognitions are perceived to be compatible with each other, consonance is the result. Irrelevance occurs when cognitions are deemed to have no association with, or bearing on, each other. According to this attitude theory, the individual strives toward consistency within himself or herself although some internal dissonance is usual due to the existence of a large number of cognitions relevant to any given element. Cognitive dissonance produces a state of psychological tension that activates in the individual a desire or pressure to reduce or eliminate the incompatibility and avoid further dissonance. The strength of this pressure is a function of the magnitude of the tension which in turn, depends on the ratio of dissonant to consonant elements and on the importance of the beliefs or behaviour in question. Two cognitions may



exist in a state of dissonance if neither are very important to the individual. However, important incongruous cognitions generate a large amount of discomfort that pressures the individual to try to reduce the dissonance. This may be accomplished by: a) decreasing the number or importance of dissonant elements, b) increasing the number or importance of consonant cognitions, or 3) changing one of the dissonant elements so that it becomes compatible with the other cognitions. The latter change may involve altering either one's thoughts, feelings, or behaviour.

In terms of this theory, preconceptions are often protected and confirmed by a process of interpreting and remembering subsequent information in ways that fit and support the original bias. This selective perception and recall of information are attempts to preserve consonance among cognitions. When the behaviour of an object of prejudice is perceived to be inconsistent with the preconceptions held about him or her, the behaviour is often misinterpreted to be in line with the biases held or attributed to special circumstances.

According to Festinger, misinterpretation of the incompatible behaviour or information received might occur in one of two ways. The individual may be so biased that an action by, or information about, the object of prejudice is simply misperceived right from the onset. It is seen to be in line with the existing bias despite all evidence of a

different possible interpretation. Alternatively, the individual may initially correctly perceive the behaviour or understand the information received, then proceed to distort the facts by a circuitous line of reasoning which results in misunderstanding. If initial, correct understanding of the dissonant cognition has been too clearly perceived by the subject to allow for subsequent distortion and misunderstanding, the individual may reject the new information as not being factual, or he or she may accept the message but make it invalid for himself or herself by claiming that it represents an unusual circumstance involving the object of prejudice.

Finally, an individual may selectively forget dissonance-producing information. This is difficult to do because such information is likely to be salient in the individual's mind. However, given a brief exposure to the incompatible cognition, no other reminders in the person's daily life, and a sufficient lapse in time, there is a significant tendency for the person to forget the dissonant information.

These processes all allow an individual to encounter cognitions incompatible with his or her preexisting biases without experiencing too much discomfort. In this way, prejudicial thinking is fairly resistant to change through logical arguments or additional information. Thus, Cognitive Dissonance Theory offers one explanation of why ageism in employment selection may remain today, despite a

broad range of attempts to change this situation.

### Predicting Discrimination on the Basis of Prejudice

Based on Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance Theory, one might expect that prejudicial thoughts and feelings would be good predictors of discriminatory behaviour, given that this theory postulates that individuals strive to maintain congruence among their cognitions. This may be true if one first of all eliminates all those situations where special circumstances provide individuals with compelling reasons for not acting in accordance with their attitudes. For example, people may have prejudicial thoughts and feelings that they do not act upon because of legislation or social pressures and anxieties about public acceptance of their actions (Abella, 1984; Connor et al., 1977). Situational factors may influence behaviour. Deaux and Wrightsman (1984) contend that if a young Vietnamese child is about to be hit by a car almost everyone, regardless of personal attitudes toward Vietnamese people, would react to save the child. Similarly, they describe the situation of a man who is negatively biased towards blacks. If he boards a bus and finds that the only seat available is next to a black person, he may sit down in this empty seat regardless of his bias if his feet hurt or if he is tired. People may also discriminate against others without personally holding prejudicial views (Myers, 1983). Illustrating this are employers who avoid hiring members of certain categories

simply to avoid offending their customers (Robertson, 1977). Still other situations may arise from systemic discrimination independent of all prejudicial intent, that is, discrimination arising out of the systems, practices, and institutional factors in place (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1984). These considerations all make it difficult to predict discrimination on the basis of prejudice (Erlich, 1973; Robertson, 1977).

Notwithstanding special circumstances or situations, Cognitive Dissonance Theory leads us to expect that in general, prejudicial attitudes should predict discriminatory behaviour. The literature offers some empirical evidence of when this in fact, occurs. The following findings are consistent with what we would expect based on Festinger's theory:

1. When an individual's self-interest is best served by acting in accordance with his or her attitudes, attitude is likely to be a good predictor of behaviour (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1984). In this instance, not only is the individual free to pursue consonance between attitude and behaviour, but the element of self-interest lends importance to the behaviour, a contributing factor in pushing the person to strive for consonance.

2. When the attitude is well-formed or the behaviour well-considered, behaviour corresponds more to an attitude than when it is an automatic action. Attentive consideration allows an individual to perceive possible

incongruities and to implement strategies such as selective perception and recall of information to avoid dissonance.

3. Correspondence is increased when attitudes are directly rooted in experience and not just hearsay (Myers, 1983). This may be because a personal experience has more importance to an individual than one that does not directly involve the person.

4. When both the attitude and the behaviour being measured are very specific and similar in situation, the likelihood of the attitude predicting behaviour is good; otherwise, inaccuracies can arise from measuring different levels of target specificity (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1984). For example, determining people's attitudes toward old people in general may contribute very little to the knowledge of how these people would react to a specific 70-year-old (Connor et al., 1978). And a negative attitude toward ethnic minorities in general need not mean that the prejudiced person would not assist a particular black person in a particular situation (Myers, 1983). In terms of Festinger's theory, it may be that a specific individual's behaviour may be attributed to special circumstances even though he or she is a member of a group generally negatively viewed. Differences in specificity may also allow biased individuals to perceive certain cognitions as unrelated or not necessarily following one from the other, and therefore, irrelevant. Under these circumstances, differences among cognitions can be

experienced without resulting in dissonance. When both the attitude and the behaviour being measured are very specific and similar in situation, biased individuals are more likely to act in accordance with their attitudes, as they would perceive the cognitions as being related.

5. A close correlation in time between the attitude measurement and the predicted behaviour also increases the reliability of the prediction (Erlich, 1973). Festinger's theory postulates the possibility of a number of cognitions relevant to any one element. A close correlation in time between the attitude measurement and the predicted behaviour reduces the chance of additional cognitions occurring that could change the ratio of dissonant to consonant elements and lead the person toward a different direction.

#### Studies That Do Not Support the Existence of Ageism

The fact that bias against older workers remains today despite legislation and other interventions aimed at eliminating unequal treatment against this group is consistent with what we would expect on the basis of our earlier literature review on prejudice and discrimination in general, and on the predictions of Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory. Yet interestingly, some research does not support the finding of stereotyping or discrimination against mature individuals (Lee & Clemons, 1985). Botwinick (1984) points to the fact that while early studies may have found evidence of stereotyping against the

aged, a number of more recent studies do not necessarily do so.

In some cases, poor methodology may have produced spurious results. Many of the early studies were based on surveys and questionnaires containing negative statements about mature persons. Respondents had to indicate whether or not they agreed with these statements. This format did not allow for the expression of positive feelings or perceptions. Current studies are more sophisticated and consequently, may be more reliable. Some of these involve the assignment of attributions. Subjects are asked to provide reasons why an aged person succeeded or failed in a certain task or in a specific situation (e.g., Banziger & Drevenstedt, 1982; Locke-Connor & Walsh, 1980). Many newer studies present typewritten manuscripts that purport to represent transcriptions of actual interviews or true biographical accounts. These newer studies do not always support stereotyping, especially given certain circumstances. When they do, evidence of the stereotyping is much more subtle than in earlier studies.

There has also been criticism of the scaling models or measurement procedures used. Some researchers have found them to be inadequate for measuring attitudes, because they do not measure all the attitude components (Connor et al., 1978; Erlich, 1973; Labovitz, 1979). For example, some attitude questionnaires measure only the affective component of prejudice, that is, how much an individual

likes or dislikes members of a target group (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1984). Stereotype checklists often measure only whether an individual has a certain categorical belief. They may not assess how strongly that belief is held, how generally (i.e. across situations) that belief is applied to members of a specific category, whether it is applied to all members or only some, or how important that belief is to the person being questioned. Social distance questionnaires attempt to gauge the degree of relationship with members of a given group acceptable to a person. They do so by determining how the individual would act in various social situations such as school, dating, eating, and so forth. However, they measure only a report of behavioural intentions as abstracted from vague situational references (Erlich, 1973).

Locke-Connor and Walsh (1980) and Botwinick (1984) point to an important distinction between attitudes toward age groups in general and those toward specific individuals. Age groups tend to be more negatively assessed than individuals. Earlier studies may have explored attitudes toward the former; current studies may be investigating the latter. Other researchers have supported this distinction by showing that negative stereotypes of aged people in general are not necessarily reflected in people's judgements of specific older persons (Connor et al., 1978; Crockett, Press, & Osterkamp, 1979; Wingard, Heath, & Himelstein, 1982).



Context seems to influence attitudes. When elderly persons are judged relative to younger persons, the ensuing judgements may be more negative than had the older persons been judged alone (Wingard et al., 1982). Some studies have found a correlation between stereotypes and age of the evaluator. Young evaluators may rate older workers more negatively than do older raters (McPherson, 1980; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985).

The amount and type of information the assessor possesses concerning an older individual may be especially important in influencing attitudes. This is the contention and focus of the present research. Four studies in particular strongly support this conclusion. They are described next. This present study emanates directly from two of them--the investigations conducted by Lee and Clemons (1985) and by Crockett et al. (1979).

Connor et al. (1978) studied the effect of knowing whether or not fictional job applicants were hired for a job. Students were asked to assess old and young candidates on a number of factors in determining whether or not they would be inclined to hire the applicant. The assessment itself was based on a fictional transcript of a job interview. Candidate variables that were manipulated included age (24 or 63), occupation applied for (switchboard operator or teacher's aide), and interview outcome (hired, not hired, or unknown). Surprisingly, perhaps, there was no evidence of age discrimination.

Rather, the determining variable in this investigation was the interview outcome. Applicants known to be hired were viewed more favorably than those allegedly not hired, regardless of age.

These results were upheld in a study by Locke-Connor and Walsh (1980) based on another hypothetical job interview. This time, the manipulations were competence of the applicant (competent and noncompetent), the interview outcome (hired and not hired), age of the subject (25 years old or 65 years old), and sex of the subject (male or female). There was an additional manipulation of the raters' ages (college students and a group aged 25 to 64 with an average age of 38). Regardless of the candidate's age or sex, perceived competence and the knowledge that the person was hired for the job yielded positive evaluations. Interestingly, attributions of age and other demographic variables were advanced to explain why an older candidate in the less competent condition was not hired. Attributions of lack of effort or ability were made for a younger applicant in this same condition.

Of particular relevance to this present research is a study by Lee and Clemons (1985) investigating the effect of information on decisions about older workers. This experiment used a 2x2 factorial design. Subjects were asked to assume the role of a manager. In Study 1, they were given memos from an alleged 65-year-old employee requesting sponsorship to a work-related conference. In

one experimental condition, subjects were provided with only biographical information about the applicant; in another condition, they were given both biographical information and a moderately positive performance report on which to base their decision. In Study 2, subjects were presented with a choice between two employees, aged 32 and 61 years old, respectively, for attendance at the conference. One condition again involved the provision of only biographical information about the two applicants. In the other condition, subjects received both biographical information and a moderately positive performance report for each candidate.

Lee and Clemons found that more favorable decisions were made about older workers when they were not compared to younger workers, but assessed independently, and performance reports were provided. Secondly, ratings for the older workers were significantly less favorable than for the younger workers when only biographical information was presented for both groups, but significantly more favorable than for younger counterparts when moderately positive performance reports were provided. This latter finding is of particular interest to this present research. However, the results of the Lee and Clemons experiment pertained to factors affecting decisions made about employed older workers. The present thesis purports to investigate whether providing additional positive information to employers will affect decisions made about

unemployed mature job seekers.

A study by Crockett et al. (1979) suggested the kind of information that might influence an employer in favour of an older unemployed job applicant. These researchers investigated the impressions formed of older adults when they are perceived as deviating from stereotypic expectations. Subjects were given transcripts of alleged interviews involving either a 36-year-old or a 76-year-old widow talking about her life and how she had spent the previous day. Respondents were asked to rate their impressions on a number of scales. The authors found that the older woman was evaluated more positively than the younger one. They concluded that an older person who is perceived as deviating from stereotypic expectations may be assessed more positively than a younger person with the same characteristics.

The results of these two studies (i.e., Lee and Clemons, 1985 and Crockett et al., 1979) suggest that if mature job seekers could present to prospective employers positive information that shows that they deviate from common negative stereotypes, they would fare better in employment selection than if they did not transmit this information. The present research investigates this hypothesis. This expectation is contradictory to what Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance Theory would lead us to expect. This theory predicts that under normal circumstances, additional information would likely be

misperceived, dismissed as nonfactual, or misinterpreted to be in line with original biases.

### Summary of the Literature Review

In summary of the preceding pages, we saw that unemployed mature workers often face a duration of joblessness that exceeds that of other workers (Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; Statistics Canada, 1990). Employer prejudice is an important factor contributing to the problems older workers experience in attempting to regain employment (Doering et al., 1983; Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985; Social Planning Council, 1980).

Prejudice was defined in this thesis as "an unjustifiable negative attitude toward a group and its individual members" (Myers, 1983, p. 431). It comprises of a cognitive component (usually negative stereotypes), an affective dimension (feelings--often negative), and a behavioural tendency (the predisposition to act or respond negatively to the target of bias).

Some common stereotypes involving older workers are expectations of declines with age, in physical and mental abilities, trainability, motivation, flexibility, and creativity in problem-solving (Doering et al., 1983; Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Mowdesian, 1986; Wigdor & Foot, 1988). For example, mature employees are generally perceived to be in poor or declining health and weak physical condition. Intelligence, memory, learning

ability, and problem-solving abilities are all considered to have decreased (Banziger & Drevenstedt, 1982; Doering et al., 1983; Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985). Employers believe that these job applicants are less motivated and less interested in learning new job skills than their younger counterparts, and that they are less creative or astute in facing new challenges (Fleisher & Kaplan, 1980; Mowlesian, 1986). Mature workers are also considered less trainable with less potential for development than younger employees (Gordus et al, 1981; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985).

The accuracy of these generalizations is still a matter of controversy in the literature. In general, however, there seems to be ample support for the position that many of the negative stereotypes are unfounded (Gelman, 1982; Rosen & Jerdee, 1985; Wigdor & Foot, 1988).

Ageism may already begin to be experienced by workers as young as 35 to 45 years old, and it increases progressively as employees age (Botwinick, 1980; Casey & Bruche, 1983).

Although most of the available studies focus on males, some researchers contend that mature women may be subject to a double devaluation--sexism compounded by ageism (Fuller & Martin, 1980; Mowlesian, 1986; Nishio & Lank, 1987). Bias against older female job applicants began early in their lives, with pre-employment discrimination, that is, with biases that affected their choices or

opportunities prior to their entering the labour force (Nishio & Lank, 1987; Shaw & Shaw, 1988; Wrightsman & Deaux, 1981). All their working years, they were subjected to bias in employment selection and occupational distribution and this continues in their mature years (Jonung, 1986; Schmid, 1986). In the main, mature women are concentrated in service jobs while older men occupy managerial positions (Chen, 1987). In most areas, they are less likely to be hired for a position than a similarly qualified male applicant (Almquist, 1979).

Several pieces of legislation exist in Canada and in the United States prohibiting discrimination against older persons in employment situations. There is no evidence that this legislation has been successful in curbing ageism (Casey & Bruche, 1983). In fact, it may have made matters more difficult for older persons seeking work. First of all, legislation may have arbitrarily defined who was or was not old (Mowseian, 1986). Secondly, by increasing job security for those already employed, it may have made some employers more leary of hiring older workers in the first place (Casey & Bruche, 1983). Other proposed solutions to this problem, e.g., education, "awareness sessions", affirmative action and employment equity, and the collective bargaining process have not met with greater success (Abella, 1984; Clark, 1980; Tucker, 1980; Schmid, 1986). Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance Theory offers one plausible explanation for why this is so.

According to this theory, individuals strive for consistency or consonance among their cognitions. When cognitive dissonance (i.e., incompatibility among cognitions) occurs, a state of psychological tension is experienced that pressures the person to attempt to reduce or eliminate the incompatibility and avoid further dissonance. Thus, a prejudiced individual will reinterpret and remember subsequent information that is not compatible with the original bias, in a way that is consistent with the original belief so as to reduce dissonance within himself or herself. Because of this, prejudicial thinking may be fairly resistant to change through logical arguments or additional information. This may be one reason why weakly enforced legislation and other attempted solutions have not been more successful than they have been, in changing the situation for older employees.

Based on Festinger's (1957) Cognitive Dissonance Theory, one might expect prejudicial thoughts and feelings to be good predictors of discriminatory behaviour, given that this theory postulates that individuals strive to maintain congruence among their cognitions. There is some support for this position in the literature, but only in the absence of special circumstances that provide individuals with compelling reasons for not acting in accordance with their attitudes.

On the other hand, there are also other studies that do not support findings of ageism, or that describe



situations in which bias is lessened or not at all evident. For example, negative judgements may be made against older people in general but not necessarily against specific individuals (Botwinick, 1984). When information about older workers is known, they may be assessed more favorably than when no data is available (Connor et al., 1978; Lee & Clemons, 1985; Locke-Connor & Walsh, 1980). Older individuals who contradict stereotypic expectations may also be assessed more favorably than those who do not (Crockett et al., 1979; Palmore, 1982).

#### Discussion of the Literature Review and Deduction of the Hypotheses

Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory predicts that prejudice will be resistant to change through additional information or logical argument. Evidence of continued bias against older workers is consistent with what we would expect based on this theory, as is the lack of success of some of the interventions attempted. For example, public education and awareness sessions have endeavored to provide additional information about targets of prejudice and thereby, to refute stereotypes and myths. They have aimed mainly at changing bias against older people in general.

In considering investigations that have found no evidence of prejudice or discrimination, we find that in some of these studies, additional information was provided on specific members of the target group. This is the format of investigations that use alleged transcripts of

actual interviews or true biographical accounts. For example, the studies by Lee and Clemons (1985) and Crockett et al. (1979) described earlier in this paper, used a case study format and a transcript of an alleged job interview, respectively. Accordingly, respondents were asked to assess specific older persons. In neither case was evidence of ageism found.

It may be that Cognitive Dissonance Theory does not accurately predict the effect of additional positive information on attitudes when older persons are perceived as individuals and not merely as target group members. Consistent with this position is the contention that age groups tend to be more negatively assessed than individuals (Botwinick, 1984; Locke-Connor & Walsh, 1980) and research that shows that judgements of specific older persons do not always reflect negative stereotypes (Connor et al., 1978; Crockett et al., 1979; Wingard et al., 1982).

Given this hypothesis, and based on the findings of Lee and Clemons (1985) and Crockett et al. (1979), it could be reasoned that older job seekers might avoid bias if they could succeed in getting employers to regard them as individuals separate from the target group to which they belong and lacking the undesirable traits and behaviours commonly attributed to that group. One way to accomplish this goal might be through résumés containing positive information contradicting common stereotypes.

In today's labour market with its high level of

unemployment, employers generally receive numerous résumés and applications in response to advertised job vacancies. These are culled and only a select few are invited to an interview. In turn, only those interviewed have any chance of being hired. Thus, résumés have become common employee selection techniques (Ash & Levine, 1985; Rasmussen, 1984), frequently used to determine whom the employer will or will not interview (Bolles, 1971; Bostwick, 1980; EIC, 1981; Mathews & Fawcett, 1984). This determination, as well as the whole selection process, is often based on subjective impressions and judgements by interviewers and is therefore liable to stereotyping and fixed impressions (Cohen & Gump, 1984). It has been the author's experience as an employment counsellor for seven years that in many cases, qualified mature individuals are screened out at the application stage and never granted interviews. This may be the result of bias. The author has also noted that most older job seekers present only brief, impersonal résumés. This is, in fact, how many popular job search books depict the résumé (Bolles, 1971; Bostwick, 1980; EIC, 1981). However, it would appear that this may be insufficient for overcoming fixed, negative evaluations. It may be that brief, impersonal résumés are not sufficient for getting employers to consider the older applicant as an individual separate from the target group to whom he or she belongs.

Based on the preceding considerations and on the literature review, it seemed reasonable to hypothesize that

mature applicants whose résumés contained additional positive information that was inconsistent with common negative stereotypes would fare better in obtaining interviews than those without such résumés. It was also expected that the advantage gained from this additional information would be greater for older males than for older females since women must overcome not only age-based but also gender-related prejudice.

#### Hypotheses

1. Given similar qualifications and similar standard résumés, older job seekers are expected to be evaluated as being less suitable for a position and less likely to be invited for a job interview than are younger job seekers.

2. Mature job applicants whose résumés contain additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes are expected to be assessed as more suitable for a position and more likely to be invited for a job interview than mature job applicants whose résumés do not provide this information.

3. Mature male applicants who provide employers with additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes are expected to be more favorably evaluated as suitable for a position and more likely to be invited for a job interview than mature females with identical qualifications and identical résumés.

## METHODOLOGY

### Subjects

Four hundred and thirty-four undergraduate psychology students, males and females, participated in this study, randomly assigned to one of eight experimental conditions. Students were all volunteers who received course credit for participation.

### Procedure

The experimenter randomly distributed to each student one of eight versions of a role play scenario. Subjects were asked to turn over the package received, face down, until verbal instructions had been completed. The researcher reminded students of their right to leave the experiment at any time and still receive a course credit for participating in this experiment. They were asked to treat the study seriously and to read over the package they had received with care. Subjects who agreed to participate were further asked to remain seated for a minimum of 20 minutes from the time the experiment started. This was to reduce possible distraction during the study and to encourage students to consider the material carefully. Final verbal instructions referred the students to two debriefing sign-up sheets at the head of the classroom. The first sheet was to obtain a summary of the study once all the subjects had been run. The second sheet was to obtain a summary of results once these had been analyzed

and presented.

The role play scenario received by each student contained an explanation of subjects' rights (see Appendix A) and an information package comprised of instructions (see Appendix B), a newspaper advertisement for the position of Inventory Control Officer (see Appendix C), a job description (see Appendix D), more instructions (see Appendix E), a résumé (see Appendices F to M), and a questionnaire (see Appendix N) in that order. The instructions, newspaper advertisement, job description, and questionnaire were the same for all experimental conditions. The résumé varied according to experimental condition and in turn, determined the condition to which the subject belonged.

Résumés were identical in Conditions 1, 2, 3, and 4 except for the name, age, and gender of the alleged job applicant, and the fact that additional information unrelated to the position of Inventory Control Officer was outlined in the résumés in Conditions 3 and 4 pursuant with the older age and longer labour force attachment of these applicants. In Condition 1 they were attributed to a 25-year-old male named Darrell Cousins (see Appendix F); in Condition 2, to a 25-year-old female, Lana Inglis (see Appendix G); to a 55-year-old male, Joseph Tippet in Condition 3 (see Appendix H); and to a 55-year-old female, Mary Watson, in Condition 4 (see Appendix I). For these first four experimental conditions, résumés (format and

content) were modelled on guidelines and samples provided in How to Find a Job in Today's Market - A Guide for Job Seekers published by Employment and Immigration Canada (1987) and on criteria for effective résumés as investigated by Pibal (1985) and Matthews and Fawcett (1984).

Résumés in the four remaining experimental conditions, i.e., Conditions 5, 6, 7, and 8 were also identical to each other, once more differing only in name, gender, and age of the alleged job seeker, and by additional employment unrelated to the Inventory Control Officer position in Conditions 7 and 8 in accordance with the greater age and longer labour force attachment of these job seekers. In Condition 5, the résumé purported to be from a 25-year-old male, Craig Campbell (see Appendix J); in Condition 6, from a 25-year-old female, Lisa Parker (see Appendix G); from a 55-year-old male, Thomas Johnson in Condition 7 (see Appendix H); and finally, in Condition 8, from a 55-year-old female, Janice Mowatt (see Appendix I). In these latter four conditions, the résumés were based on qualifications similar to those possessed by the candidates in the first four experimental conditions. However, in these conditions, more information was provided. This additional information deliberately contradicted some of the negative stereotypes of older workers held by employers, that is, beliefs concerning the workers' trainability, flexibility, physical condition, intelligence

and mental alertness, creativity in problem-solving, and motivation.

Table I depicts the eight experimental conditions and characteristics of each job applicant.

Subjects were instructed to read through all of the material carefully before answering the questionnaire included at the end of the package. This material asked them to assume the role of the owner of a small company that sells truck parts and filters. They were advised that a vacancy existed in their company for an Inventory Control Officer and that they were looking for a suitable individual to train for this position. The package then provided a description of the alleged job (see Appendix D). Subjects were advised that although 42 applications for the position had been received, their aim was to interview no more than 6 candidates and to hire 1 of these. It was then stated that a résumé from one of these forty-two applicants was attached. Students were requested to read through this document thoroughly to determine the suitability of this individual as the Inventory Control Officer trainee. Finally, they were to complete the questionnaire at the end of the package.

One of eight versions of the résumé followed, as described earlier in this section and reproduced in Appendices F, G, H, I, J, K, L, and M. The package ended with a questionnaire (see Appendix N) asking subjects to assess the likelihood that they would invite the candidate.



Table I  
Characteristics of the Job Applicants  
in Each of the Eight Experimental Conditions

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Résumé Type Used</u>
1	Darrell Cousins	Male	25	Regular
2	Lana Inglis	Female	25	Regular
3	Joseph Tippet	Male	55	Regular
4	Mary Watson	Female	55	Regular
5	Craig Campbell	Male	25	Additional Information
6	Lisa Parker	Female	25	Additional Information
7	Thomas Johnson	Male	55	Additional Information
8	Janice Mowatt	Female	55	Additional Information

whose application they had reviewed, for an interview. It also asked respondents to discuss how they had arrived at this decision and to evaluate the applicant's suitability for the job on each of a number of criteria.

Upon completion of the task, students returned their packages to the experimenter and had their course credit cards signed. Interested students also signed one or both of the debriefing sheets.

## RESULTS

This study was undertaken to investigate three main hypotheses. The first was derived from a review of studies such as those by Doering et al. (1983) and Gordus et al. (1981); from various governmental reports on aging (Canada Employment and Immigration 1985; Government of Canada, 1982, 1983); and from statistics on average duration of unemployment (Statistics Canada, 1990). This hypothesis stated that given similar qualifications and similar standard résumés, older job seekers would be evaluated as being less suitable for a position and less likely to be invited for a job interview than younger job seekers.

The second hypothesis was based primarily on studies by Lee and Clemons (1985) and Crockett et al. (1979). It predicted that mature job applicants whose résumés contained additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes would be assessed as more suitable for a position and more likely to be invited for a job interview than mature job seekers whose résumés did not provide this information.

The final hypothesis followed from studies by Chen, 1987; Fuller & Martin, 1980; Jonung, 1986; Mowseian, 1986; Nishio & Lank, 1987; Schmid, 1986; and Wrightsman and Deaux, 1981. Mature male applicants who provided employers with additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes were expected to be more favorably evaluated as

suitable for a position and more likely to be invited for a job interview than mature females with identical qualifications and identical résumés.

The data was first reviewed for frivolous or obviously contradictory answers; for evidence that the respondent had not understood the task or the questions, or had mistaken the gender of the alleged job applicant; and for instances where six or more dependent variables had been left unanswered. These circumstances were established as criteria for rejecting the entire questionnaire. They were taken as an indication that either the respondent had not treated the task seriously enough or that the respondent's command of the English language was too limited to assure beyond reasonable doubt that all questions and aspects of the role-play had been understood. Culling was considered important to ensure, as much as possible, data integrity and to better approximate the earnestness with which this task is generally performed by actual employers. As a result of this review, 7 questionnaires were discarded for missing responses, 9 for contradictory answers, 4 for mistakes in the gender of the job applicant, and 3 for frivolous answers. This left 411 questionnaires for analysis, or 94.4% of the original responses. It was felt that the number of discarded responses was small enough that it would not impact significantly on the results of the analysis.

Descriptive information was extracted from this

remaining data--frequencies, means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test was also run. Next, in preparation for inferential testing, Hartley's F Max test was performed. The three main hypotheses were tested by means of orthogonal contrasts. In addition to these preplanned comparisons, exploratory testing was done using Analysis of Variance tests.

#### Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive information was extracted from the data. Tables 2 to 9 display frequencies, means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis for the dependent variables in each of the experimental conditions. Considerable variation was found among means within treatment groups. Positive assessments were sometimes rendered on some measures but not on others within a group. In general, education was assessed less positively than most other dependent variables, whereas previous experience was rated more positively than other factors. The relationship of other dependent variables within a group differed according to experimental condition. Skewness for the present data seems to be fairly symmetrical; the kurtosis (i.e., either more or less peaked than a normal distribution) may be a little flat. However, for a fixed effects model such as the present experiment, a moderate departure from normality is not important (Neter, Wasserman, & Kutner, 1985).

Table 2  
Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis  
Condition 1--Male Applicant, 25 Years Old, Regular Résumé

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	53	3.98	0.91	-0.44	-0.73
Overall Suitability	53	1.91	0.71	0.80	1.39
Trainability	53	1.83	0.67	0.61	0.97
Education	53	3.00	0.78	0.50	0.01
Skills	53	2.04	0.65	0.40	0.82
Flexibility	53	2.21	0.84	0.60	1.09
Previous Experience	53	1.74	0.79	1.00	0.86
Age	53	1.66	0.73	0.94	0.65
Physical Condition	53	1.32	0.51	1.23	0.49
Intelligence	53	2.32	0.67	-0.09	-0.26
Motivation	53	2.25	0.81	0.66	1.49
Creativity	53	2.36	0.90	-0.13	-0.08

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

Table 3

Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis

Condition 2--Female Applicant, 25 Years Old, Regular Résumé

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	54	3.74	0.94	-0.31	-0.70
Overall Suitability	54	2.11	0.57	1.27	3.80
Trainability	54	1.61	0.66	0.61	-0.59
Education	54	2.85	0.74	-0.05	1.22
Skills	54	2.00	0.61	0	-0.21
Flexibility	53	2.02	0.72	0.29	-0.09
Previous Experience	54	1.81	0.62	0.13	-0.41
Age	53	1.85	0.91	1.11	1.51
Physical Condition	54	1.81	0.95	0.79	-0.57
Intelligence	53	2.06	0.69	1.38	5.47
Motivation	53	1.94	0.79	0.34	-0.67
Creativity	54	2.31	0.95	0.83	0.96

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

Table 4

Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis

Condition 3--Male Applicant, 55 Years Old, Regular Résumé

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	52	3.46	0.98	-0.41	-0.73
Overall Suitability	52	2.33	1.76	0.48	0.13
Trainability	52	2.46	0.94	0.86	0.69
Education	52	3.13	0.95	-0.14	-0.34
Skills	52	2.08	1.79	0.61	0.38
Flexibility	52	2.31	0.76	0.27	-0.06
Previous Experience	52	1.87	0.79	0.74	0.34
Age	52	3.46	1.09	-0.55	0.11
Physical Condition	52	2.40	0.89	0.30	0.28
Intelligence	52	2.30	0.76	-0.30	-0.69
Motivation	52	2.06	0.85	0.29	-0.72
Creativity	52	2.46	0.85	0.12	0.50

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.



Table 5

## Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis

## Condition 4--Female Applicant, 55 Years Old, Regular Résumé

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	52	3.29	1.02	-0.04	-0.78
Overall Suitability	52	2.40	0.85	0.31	-0.40
Trainability	52	1.98	0.83	0.47	-0.38
Education	52	2.85	0.80	-0.19	-0.49
Skills	52	1.98	0.75	0.60	0.50
Flexibility	51	2.29	0.83	0.04	-0.58
Previous Experience	52	1.79	0.70	0.68	0.75
Age	52	3.81	0.89	-0.31	-0.58
Physical Condition	52	2.62	1.01	0.26	-0.23
Intelligence	52	2.25	0.71	0.28	0.13
Motivation	52	2.12	0.78	0.05	-0.79
Creativity	52	2.29	0.67	0.01	-0.15

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

Table 6

Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis

Condition 5--Male Applicant, 25 Years Old, Résumé with Additional Information

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	50	4.08	0.97	-1.16	1.26
Overall Suitability	51	1.92	0.72	0.46	0.19
Trainability	51	1.39	0.57	1.12	0.34
Education	51	2.47	0.76	-0.18	-0.28
Skills	51	2.00	0.66	0	-0.63
Flexibility	51	1.88	0.59	0.02	-0.05
Previous Experience	51	1.76	0.68	0.33	-0.79
Age	51	1.65	0.72	0.65	-0.78
Physical Condition	51	1.25	0.44	1.16	-0.68
Intelligence	51	1.73	0.67	0.37	-0.72
Motivation	51	1.61	0.67	0.65	-0.58
Creativity	51	1.55	0.70	0.90	-0.41

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

Table 7

Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis

Condition 6--Female Applicant, 25 Years Old, Résumé with Additional Information

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	51	4.08	0.89	-0.69	-0.26
Overall Suitability	51	1.80	0.63	0.18	-0.52
Trainability	51	1.41	0.64	1.79	4.17
Education	51	2.57	0.83	0.10	-0.51
Skills	51	1.78	0.88	1.00	0.36
Flexibility	51	1.78	0.78	0.41	-1.24
Previous Experience	51	1.69	0.81	1.35	1.86
Age	51	1.86	0.83	1.15	2.66
Physical Condition	51	1.53	0.67	1.32	2.26
Intelligence	49	1.71	0.65	0.35	-0.64
Motivation	51	1.35	0.59	1.50	1.29
Creativity	51	1.47	0.67	1.13	0.09

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

Table 8

Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis

Condition 7--Male Applicant, 55 Years Old, Résumé with Additional Information

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	52	3.77	1.02	-0.43	-0.88
Overall Suitability	51	2.00	0.69	0.75	1.51
Trainability	52	2.00	0.93	0.76	-0.10
Education	52	2.69	0.90	0.49	0.34
Skills	52	1.87	0.71	0.54	0.31
Flexibility	51	1.98	0.91	0.88	1.09
Previous Experience	52	1.71	0.64	0.33	-0.62
Age	52	3.37	1.03	-0.13	-0.30
Physical Condition	52	2.12	0.78	0.30	-0.25
Intelligence	52	1.85	0.67	0.59	1.03
Motivation	52	1.58	0.78	1.17	0.64
Creativity	51	1.84	1.05	1.31	1.50

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

Table 9

Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis

Condition 8--Female Applicant, 25 Years Old, Résumé with Additional Information

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Skewness</u>	<u>Kurtosis</u>
Likely to Interview	46	3.78	0.94	-0.71	0.56
Overall Suitability	46	2.15	0.73	0.83	1.20
Trainability	46	1.67	0.84	1.16	0.74
Education	46	2.57	0.89	0.40	0.21
Skills	46	1.93	0.65	0.58	1.48
Flexibility	46	1.98	0.80	0.31	-0.67
Previous Experience	46	1.54	0.62	0.70	-0.43
Age	46	3.50	0.86	0.11	-0.56
Physical Condition	46	2.59	1.02	0.53	0.35
Intelligence	46	1.83	0.57	-0.02	-0.03
Motivation	46	1.39	0.61	1.34	0.81
Creativity	45	1.53	0.66	0.86	-0.30

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

There is also considerable variance among experimental conditions. This is summarized in Table 10 which shows the range of means among treatment groups for each dependent variable. As expected, the majority of the least positive assessments (lowest mean for likelihood of interviewing; highest mean for the other dependent variables) were made for job applicants in Conditions 3 and 4--the 55-year-old male and 55-year-old female applicants with regular résumés. Two interesting exceptions are intelligence and motivation, where the least positive assessment was obtained by the applicant in Condition 1, the 25-year-old male with a regular résumé. Conversely, the majority of the most positive assessments were made for job applicants in Conditions 5 and 6--the 25-year-old male and 25-year-old female applicants with résumés containing additional positive information. Here, the notable exception is that the 55-year-old female applicant in Condition 8 obtained the most positive assessment of all groups in terms of previous experience.

The amount of variability among means from one condition to another is also interesting. As could be expected given our hypotheses, suitability of the applicant's age, physical condition, and trainability all show a great range among means (differences of 2.16, 1.37, and 1.07 respectively). More surprising is the fact that likelihood of interviewing and overall suitability show much more moderate ranges (differences of .79 and .6

Table 10

## Variability Among Experimental Conditions

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Range</u>
	<u>Mean</u>		<u>Mean</u>		
Likely to Interview	3.29	4	4.08	5 & 6	0.79
Overall Suitability	1.80	6	2.40	4	0.60
Trainability	1.39	5	2.46	3	1.07
Education	2.47	5	3.13	3	0.66
Skills	1.78	6	2.08	3	0.30
Flexibility	1.78	6	2.29	4	0.51
Previous Experience	1.54	8	1.87	3	0.33
Age	1.65	5	3.81	4	2.16
Physical Condition	1.25	5	2.62	4	1.37
Intelligence	1.71	6	2.32	1	0.61
Motivation	1.35	6	2.25	1	0.90
Creativity	1.47	6	2.46	3	0.99

Note: For likelihood of interviewing, a higher mean = a more positive assessment.

For other dependent variables, a lower mean = a more positive assessment.

respectively). Skills and previous experience show the least variance (.3 and .33 respectively). Note that these two latter measures are not among common stereotypes.

#### Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Test

A Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Test was performed to determine the extent to which the dependent variables were correlated. This test was conducted on 66 combinations of dependent variables. The alpha level was established at .05 overall. To reduce the possibility of Type I error, the Bonferoni approach to multiple testing was applied. Thus, each individual pair of variables was tested at the .0007 alpha level (i.e., .05/66). Of special interest to this present research were how likelihood of interviewing, overall suitability, and suitability of the applicant's age correlated with the other dependent variables. As expected, likelihood of interviewing and overall suitability each correlated significantly with every other variable at the established .0007 level. Suitability of the applicant's age, however, did not correlate significantly with skills, previous experience, motivation, or creativity. This is surprising, since motivation and creativity are among common stereotypes applied to older job seekers, and so, could have been expected to correlate highly with age. All other dependent variables correlated significantly except for previous experience which did not correlate significantly with education or intelligence; and physical condition



which did not significantly correlate with education, skills, or previous experience. Thus, of the 66 pairs tested, only 9 pairs, or 13.6%, were not significantly correlated with each other.

Four pairs had strong correlations of  $r = .5$  or more. These were likelihood of interviewing and overall suitability,  $r(407) = -0.65$ ; age and physical condition,  $r(408) = 0.57$ ; intelligence and motivation,  $r(405) = 0.54$ ; and motivation and creativity,  $r(407) = 0.56$ . Note that the evaluation scale for likelihood of interviewing was designed to be inversely related to all the other dependent variables, which accounts for its negative correlation with overall suitability. Moderate correlations of  $r = .3$  to less than  $r = .5$  were found in 26 pairs. Small correlations of less than  $r = .3$  were found in the remaining 36 pairs.

These results confirm the expected relationships between likelihood of interviewing and each of the other variables, and between overall suitability and each of the other measures; and partially confirm the expected relationship between suitability of the applicant's age and the other variables. They also indicate that none of the variables are redundant, but that all are related and measure the candidates' assessed suitability for the alleged job opening in slightly different ways.

#### Hartley's F Max Test

For accurate results in testing preplanned

comparisons, there must be independence among the planned comparisons. This assumption was met in the present study. The second assumption is that of a normal distribution. Large samples approximate normal distribution, so this was also not a problem with the current data. Of more concern is the assumption of homogeneity of variance, although there is a difference of opinion among statisticians as to the importance of this assumption as well, given fairly large sample sizes (Hays, 1980; Neter, Wasserman, & Kutner, 1985). Nonetheless, to be on the conservative side, Hartley's F Max test was conducted to test for homogeneity of error variance within groups.

The formula for Hartley's F Max test is

$$H = \frac{\max (s^2)}{\min (s^2)}$$

The alpha level for this test was controlled at .05 and there were 8 treatment groups. The degrees of freedom ranged from 52 to 53. The closest number of degrees of freedom listed in available F Max Ratio tables was 60, which gave us a critical value of 2.22.

When Hartley's test was first performed, 5 dependent variables exceeded the critical value of 2.22. Transformations were applied to stabilize the variances and reduce the range between minimum and maximum variances. The first transformation used was a Log transformation. Hartley's F Max test was reapplied to the transformed data. Only physical condition and creativity still exceeded the

critical value. Applying a Reciprical transformation to physical condition brought it below the critical value on Hartley's F Max test. Creativity remained above this value but a Square Root transformation lowered its F Max ratio to 2.42. Considering the controversy we discussed earlier as to whether or not Hartley's test is actually required when large sample sizes are used, and considering that only one variable still exceeded the critical value, we decided to proceed with the analysis. The reader may wish to bear in mind that there was a slight problem with homogeneity of variance for creativity.

#### Orthogonal Contrasts

Since there were specific questions to be asked of the data, it was decided at the outset to use the technique of planned comparisons. For any given comparison, planned testing is more powerful than post hoc testing (Hays, 1980). There were three preplanned comparisons to be investigated, each corresponding to one of the hypotheses described earlier in the Results section. The first involved comparing the means of Condition 1 plus Condition 2 with those of Conditions 3 and 4 combined. The second comparison looked at the means of Condition 7 plus Condition 8 relative to those of Condition 3 plus Condition 4. And the third compared the means of Condition 8 with the means of Condition 7.

These preplanned comparisons were tested by applying Orthogonal Contrasts to the means of the transformed data.

The results of these tests are shown in Tables 11 to 13. The Bonferoni approach to multiple contrasts was used. The alpha level was set at .05 overall for a one-tailed test. Therefore, each comparison had an alpha level of  $.05/3$  or .0166.

Hypothesis 1 had predicted that given similar qualifications and similar standard résumés, older job seekers would be evaluated as less suitable for a position and less likely to be invited for a job interview than younger job seekers. This hypothesis is partially supported by the results. At the .0166 alpha level, the differences between older and younger applicants with regular standard résumés were found to be significant in terms of likelihood of interviewing ( $t = 3.70$ ,  $p = .0001$ ) and overall suitability ( $t = -3.14$ ,  $p = .0009$ ). Trainability ( $t = -4.32$ ,  $p = .0001$ ); age ( $t = -14.48$ ,  $p = .0001$ ); and physical condition ( $t = -8.71$ ,  $p = .0001$ ) also all show significant differences. Although the other dependent variables were not significantly different in this contrast, their t-test scores were in the expected direction.

The second hypothesis predicted that mature job applicants whose résumés contained additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes would be assessed as more suitable for a position and more likely to be invited for a job interview than mature job applicants whose résumés did not provide this information.

Table 11

Results of Orthogonal Contrast Testing Applied to Hypothesis 1

Contrast 1:  $(u_1 + u_2) - (u_3 + u_4)$

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>E. V.<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
Likely to Interview	1	0.15	3.70	.0001 *
Overall Suitability	1	-0.16	-3.14	.0009 *
Trainability	1	-0.24	-4.32	.0001 *
Education	1	-0.01	-0.16	.4379
Skills	1	0.02	0.30	.3835
Flexibility	1	-0.09	-1.62	.0526
Previous Experience	1	-0.03	-0.45	.3270
Age	1	-0.78	-14.48	.0001 *
Physical Condition	1	-0.34	-8.71	.0001 *
Intelligence	1	-0.03	-0.67	.2528
Motivation	1	0.01	0.15	.4416
Creativity	1	-0.02	-0.57	.2860

Note. A higher mean for likelihood of interviewing and lower mean for other dependent variables = a more positive assessment. 1. E. V. is estimated value of contrast. \* denotes results significant at the alpha .0166 level, one-tailed.

Table 12

Results of Orthogonal Contrast Testing Applied to Hypothesis 2

Contrast 2:  $(u_7 + u_8) - (u_3 + u_4)$ 

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>E. V.<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
Likely to Interview	1	0.12	2.89	.0021 *
Overall Suitability	1	-0.13	-2.52	.0060 *
Trainability	1	-0.21	-3.69	.0002 *
Education	1	-0.14	-2.94	.0018 *
Skills	1	-0.06	-1.06	.1441
Flexibility	1	-0.18	-3.08	.0011 *
Previous Experience	1	-0.11	-1.88	.0303
Age	1	-0.05	-0.92	.1789
Physical Condition	1	-0.05	-1.30	.0977
Intelligence	1	-0.22	-4.22	.0001 *
Motivation	1	-0.35	-5.99	.0001 *
Creativity	1	-0.25	-6.34	.0001 *

Note. A higher mean for likelihood of interviewing and lower mean for other dependent variables = a more positive assessment. 1. E. V. is estimated value of contrast. \* denotes results significant at the alpha .0166 level, one-tailed.

Table 13  
Results of Orthogonal Contrast Testing Applied to Hypothesis 3

Contrast 1: ( $u_7 - u_8$ )

<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>E. V.<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
Likely to Interview	1	-0.00	-0.10	.4591
Overall Suitability	1	-0.04	-1.06	.1458
Trainability	1	0.09	2.18	.0148
Education	1	0.03	0.79	.2138
Skills	1	-0.03	-0.69	.2466
Flexibility	1	-0.01	-0.16	.4375
Previous Experience	1	0.05	1.30	.0967
Age	1	-0.03	-0.80	.2110
Physical Condition	1	-0.07	-2.61	.0048 *
Intelligence	1	-0.00	-0.03	.4889
Motivation	1	0.05	1.21	.1131
Creativity	1	0.05	1.68	.0470

Note. A higher mean for likelihood of interviewing and lower mean for other dependent variables = a more positive assessment. 1. E. V. is estimated value of contrast. \* denotes results significant at the alpha .0166 level, one-tailed.

Significant differences between the two groups of mature job seekers were found in relation to likelihood of interviewing ( $t = 2.89$ ,  $p = .0021$ ) and overall suitability ( $t = -2.52$ ,  $p = .0060$ ). As well, significant differences were found in relation to all the other dependent variables except for physical condition, suitability of the applicant's age, skills, and previous experience. These variables, although nonsignificant, all had t-test scores in the expected direction.

The third hypothesis had assumed that mature male applicants who provided employers with additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes would be more favorably evaluated as suitable for a position and likely to be invited for a job interview than mature females with identical qualifications and identical résumés. With the exception of significant differences in physical condition ( $t = -2.61$ ,  $p = .0048$ ), this hypothesis was not borne out. Interestingly, the t-test scores were not even all in the expected direction. In the case of six variables--likelihood of interviewing, trainability, education, previous experience, motivation, and creativity, the results showed more favorable assessments of the older woman than of the older man, given résumés with additional positive information. Trainability would actually have been significant at the .0166 alpha level in the direction opposite from that predicted.



### Post Hoc Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

A post hoc three factor ANOVA completed the statistical analysis. This was carried out for exploratory purposes to see if any other interesting results would surface that were not part of the three planned comparisons. Results of this test are displayed in Tables 14 to 25. Information gleaned from the ANOVA was supplemented by the data on means displayed in Tables 2 to 9, to help determine the direction of significant results. The ANOVA was carried out at the .05 alpha level for a two-tailed test.

The independent variable, résumé, was found to be a significant factor in 9 out of 12 dependent variables. Only previous experience, age, and physical condition did not have significant F values when résumé was tested. A review of the means in Tables 2 to 9 confirm the direction of the significant results. For all dependent variables, including those that were not significant, job applicants in conditions using résumés containing additional positive information were assessed more favorably than those in conditions using regular résumés. There were no interaction effects.

Age, as an independent variable, yielded significant results in regards to five dependent variables. These were likelihood of interviewing ( $F = 16.06$ ,  $p = .0001$ ); overall suitability ( $F = 14.87$ ,  $p = .0001$ ); trainability ( $F = 34.60$ ,  $p = .0001$ ); suitability of the applicant's age

Table 14  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Likelihood of Interviewing

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	1.45	1.45	16.06	.0001 *
Sex	1	0.07	0.07	0.82	.3653
Age x Sex	1	0.00	0.00	0.00	.9528
Résumé	1	0.80	0.80	8.84	.0031 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.12	0.12	1.31	.2527
Sex x Résumé	1	0.13	0.13	1.42	.2345
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.00	0.00	0.02	.8944
Error	402	36.29	0.09		
Total	409				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 15  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Overall Suitability

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	1.94	1.94	14.87	.0001 *
Sex	1	0.21	0.21	1.59	.2080
Age x Sex	1	0.00	0.00	0.01	.9038
Résumé	1	1.24	1.24	9.54	.0022 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.03	0.03	0.27	.6055
Sex x Résumé	1	0.12	0.12	0.94	.3331
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.40	0.40	3.09	.0793
Error	402	52.38	0.13		
Total	409				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 16  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Trainability

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	5.87	5.87	34.60	.0001 *
Sex	1	1.95	1.95	11.52	.0008 *
Age x Sex	1	0.53	0.53	3.11	.0785
Résumé	1	4.46	4.46	26.30	.0001 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.00	0.00	0.02	.8871
Sex x Résumé	1	0.25	0.25	1.50	.2211
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.05	0.05	0.30	.5866
Error	403	68.32	0.17		
Total	410				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 17  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Education

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	0.05	0.05	0.47	.4952
Sex	1	0.17	0.17	1.49	.2237
Age x Sex	1	0.10	0.10	0.85	.3565
Résumé	1	2.46	2.46	21.67	.0001 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.02	0.02	0.22	.6426
Sex x Résumé	1	0.10	0.10	0.90	.3436
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.02	0.02	0.19	.6642
Error	403	45.71	0.11		
Total	410				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 18  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Skills

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	0.00	.00	0.01	.9085
Sex	1	0.19	0.19	1.28	.2577
Age x Sex	1	0.22	0.22	1.47	.2262
Résumé	1	0.63	0.63	4.19	.0414 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.04	0.04	0.28	.5974
Sex x Résumé	1	0.01	0.01	0.08	.7792
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.39	0.39	2.58	.1087
Error	403	60.56	0.15		
Total					

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 19  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Previous Experience

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	0.01	0.01	0.06	.8026
Sex	1	0.10	0.10	0.06	.4298
Age x Sex	1	0.14	0.14	0.82	.3667
Résumé	1	0.55	0.55	3.28	.0709
Age x Résumé	1	0.13	0.13	0.77	.3818
Sex x Résumé	1	0.31	0.31	1.89	.1698
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.03	0.03	1.16	.6900
Error	403	67.10	0.17		
Total	410				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 20  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Physical Condition

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	9.40	9.40	150.90	.0001 *
Sex	1	0.90	0.90	14.46	.0002 *
Age x Sex	1	0.11	0.11	1.78	.1832
Résumé	1	0.15	0.15	2.39	.1232
Age x Résumé	1	0.00	0.00	0.05	.8174
Sex x Résumé	1	0.00	0.00	0.06	.8025
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.06	0.06	0.89	.3450
Error	403	25.11	0.06		
Total	410				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.



Table 21  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Flexibility

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	0.57	0.57	3.41	.0653
Sex	1	0.22	0.22	1.34	.2477
Age x Sex	1	0.18	0.18	1.07	.3021
Résumé	1	2.66	2.66	15.86	.0001 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.03	0.03	0.18	.6752
Sex x Résumé	1	0.00	0.00	0.02	.8930
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.02	0.02	0.10	.7546
Error	400	67.10	0.17		
Total	407				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 22  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Age of Applicant

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	57.47	57.47	378.43	.0001 *
Sex	1	1.05	1.05	6.92	.0088 *
Age x Sex	1	0.01	0.01	0.01	.9435
Résumé	1	0.05	0.05	0.30	.5851
Age x Résumé	1	0.09	0.09	0.59	.4440
Sex x Résumé	1	0.01	0.01	0.06	.8129
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.07	0.07	0.46	.4987
Error	402	61.05	0.15		
Total	409				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 23  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Motivation

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	0.01	0.01	0.04	.8456
Sex	1	0.97	0.97	5.74	.0170 *
Age x Sex	1	0.47	0.47	2.80	.0948
Résumé	1	12.37	12.37	73.12	.0001 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.00	0.00	0.00	.9917
Sex x Résumé	1	0.13	0.13	0.77	.3799
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.13	0.13	0.78	.3786
Error	402	67.98	0.17		
Total	409				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 24  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Intelligence

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	0.32	0.32	2.42	.1208
Sex	1	0.13	0.13	0.97	.3263
Age x Sex	1	0.09	0.09	0.66	.4183
Résumé	1	5.88	5.88	43.87	.0001 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.05	0.05	0.39	.5309
Sex x Résumé	1	0.13	0.13	0.93	.3345
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.07	0.07	0.54	.4618
Error	400	53.59	0.13		
Total	407				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 25  
Results of Post Hoc Analysis of Variance  
on Creativity

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS(III)</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Age	1	0.18	0.18	2.14	.1440
Sex	1	0.23	0.23	2.80	.0951
Age x Sex	1	0.07	0.07	0.81	.3678
Résumé	1	7.83	7.83	95.01	.0001 *
Age x Résumé	1	0.04	0.04	0.46	.4987
Sex x Résumé	1	0.03	0.03	0.36	.5496
Age x Sex x Résumé	1	0.01	0.01	0.09	.7685
Error	401	33.07	0.08		
Total	408				

Note: \* denotes results significant at the alpha .05 level, two-tailed.

( $F = 378.43$ ,  $p = .0001$ ); and physical condition ( $F = 150.90$ ,  $p = .0001$ ). Once more, means in Tables 2 to 9 indicate the direction of the significant results. For each of these variables, plus for all other measures except for previous experience, means in Tables 2 to 9 show more favorable scores for younger than for older candidates. Equal means were obtained for motivation. There were no interaction effects.

The third independent variable, sex, yielded significant  $F$  scores in four dependent variables--trainability ( $F = 11.52$ ,  $p = .0008$ ); age ( $F = 6.92$ ,  $p = .0088$ ); physical condition ( $F = 14.46$ ,  $p = .0002$ ); and motivation ( $F = 5.74$ ,  $p = .0170$ ). A look at the means in Tables 2 to 9 reveals an interesting fact. Seven means, including those for trainability, indicate assessments that were more favorable for women than for men. These variables are trainability, education, skills, flexibility, previous experience, intelligence, and creativity. Once more, there were no interaction effects.

## DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis predicted a bias against older job seekers as compared to younger applicants, given similar standard résumés. The results of this hypothesis were expected to provide a kind of baseline to indicate the situation facing mature job candidates today. It was meant as a stepping-stone toward the second hypothesis, the main one for this study. This main hypothesis predicted that mature applicants whose résumés contained additional positive information contradicting common negative stereotypes would be assessed more favorably than mature job seekers whose résumés did not provide this information. The final hypothesis, predicting that this enhanced résumé would benefit older men more than older women, was intended to provide more detail on the second, main hypothesis.

Introductory psychology students served as subjects. There are many precedents for using laboratory settings and students as subjects (Connor et al., 1978; Crockett et al., 1979; Lee & Clemons, 1985; Querishi & Kay, 1986; Triandis, 1978; Walsh & Connor, 1979). At least one study by Bernstein, Hakel, and Harlan (1975) compared the decision-making processes of employment interviewers and college students to determine the generalizability of experimental results obtained using students as the subject pool. The only notable difference they found was that students tended to be more lenient than the interviewers. They concluded

that the use of students did not jeopardize the generalizability of results in this research area. With these considerations in mind, and since this study represented a pilot study in an area largely ignored to date, students were deemed to be acceptable for the present research.

As recommended by Kogan (1979), Labovitz (1979), and Stier and Kline (1980), a between-subjects design was selected for this present research instead of a within-subjects study. This was done to reduce the possibility of subjects guessing that age was the dimension being assessed, thus helping to avoid age stereotype demand characteristics.

#### Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis was established on the basis of considerable evidence of ageism in the labour market. This evidence included studies and literature reviews (e.g., Atchley, 1980; Axelbank, 1972; Brandon and Snyder, 1985; Casey and Bruche, 1983; Doering et al., 1983; Fleisher and Kaplan, 1980; Gordus et al., 1981; Mowesian, 1986; Rosen and Jerdee, 1985; Wanner and McDonald, 1983; Wigdor and Foot, 1988); governmental reports on aging (Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; Government of Canada, 1982, 1983); and statistics on average duration of unemployment (Statistics Canada, 1990). Based on all of this evidence, it is surprising to find that the first hypothesis was not wholly supported.



One-tailed orthogonal contrast testing did find significant differences in the two key dependent variables, likelihood of interviewing and overall suitability. Trainability, suitability of applicant's age, and physical condition also showed significant differences. These are all factors in strongly held stereotypes and so these findings were expected. Education, skills, and previous experience are not among common generalizations. Although it was originally thought that bias in general might colour perception of these as well, this does not seem to be the case.

Flexibility, intelligence, motivation, and creativity are factors involved in common stereotypes. The lack of significant results for these variables may be, at least in part, a function of the respondents' situation. Introductory psychology students served as subjects in this study. Many of them are likely to have professors of an age near that of the hypothetical mature candidate. University professors are generally intelligent, and research pressures hone creative skills. Close interaction with these older teachers may have influenced the raters' assessments on these two variables. Results for the variable motivation may also be partly explained by the use of university students as raters. They may feel that a younger person who stops his or her formal education after Grade 12 is not a very motivated individual, particularly if this person seems to be fairly intelligent.

As discussed earlier in the Discussion section, in planning this thesis--a pilot study in an area largely ignored to date--it seemed reasonable to use students as subjects. The results however, suggest that using students may have affected assessments somewhat. It is impossible to know this for sure without comparing the assessments obtained in this thesis with assessments from actual employers. Some researchers contend that rater characteristics may influence evaluations of older persons. For example, Locke-Connor and Walsh (1980) found that college-age males were more positive in their evaluations of older applicants than were college-age females, mid-life males, or mid-life females. Mid-life males were the least positive; females of both ages were in the middle. Another study by Connor et al. (1978) showed that female students rated mature job candidates more positively than did male students. Although the results of these two studies are inconsistent, they do show that rater characteristics may impact on evaluations of older persons. This contention is supported by Querishi and Kay (1986) who investigated respondent reactions to résumés. They conclude that age and sex biases are subtly moderated by the social and personal attributes of both raters and those being rated. As concerns respondents, they state that "rater characteristics such as age, sex, years of experience, and sensitivity to discrimination issues seem to affect the degree of bias displayed in hiring practices" (p. 103).

This present thesis did not manipulate and analyze respondent characteristics. Given the results, this is recommended for future research. Nonetheless, the use of students does not appear to have jeopardized the results for the key dependent variables--likelihood of interviewing and overall suitability.

On the whole, the main contention of the first hypothesis was supported in that, given similar standard résumés, older job applicants were assessed as less suitable overall than younger candidates, and less likely to be invited for an interview.

#### Hypothesis 2

The results of the second hypothesis--the main one--were generally as expected. Means for Conditions 3, 4, 7, and 8 showed consistent improvement on every variable by both the older woman and the older man when a résumé with additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes was used rather than a regular résumé. One-tailed orthogonal contrast testing found 8 out of 12 dependent variables to be significantly different. These included the two key dependent variables, likelihood of interviewing and overall suitability, as well as trainability, education, flexibility, intelligence, motivation, and creativity. As was the case with the first hypothesis, t-test results for skills and previous experience--neither of which are involved in common stereotypes--were not found to be significant. Although

education is not a stereotype, this time, in contrast to results for hypothesis 1, a significant difference was found. Perhaps this is a result of a generalization of the large number of differences perceived overall between the two groups of older applicants.

It is difficult to explain why there are no significant differences in relation to physical condition. This variable was found to have significant t-test scores in Orthogonal Contrast 1, comparing younger and older applicants. A post hoc analysis confirms age and sex main effects on physical condition, but shows no résumé or résumé interaction effects. It may be that this particular negative belief is so strongly held, that even positive information to the contrary is not sufficient to change a biased opinion on this measure.

There were no significant differences in t-test scores on suitability of applicant's age. This is interpreted as support for the principal assumption of the present thesis that mature applicants presenting résumés containing additional positive information contradicting common negative stereotypes are perceived by employers as separate and different from the age group to which they belong. Their age per se is still regarded negatively, but they as individuals are assessed favorably. "Perceivers consistently view specific older persons as exceptional, even while they retain negative stereotypes of older people in general" (Crockett et al., 1978, p. 368).

### Hypothesis 3

There is almost no support in the results for the third hypothesis predicting gender differences among mature applicants presenting résumés containing additional positive information. Although research data on older female workers is still relatively scarce, this hypothesis was derived from a number of well-researched studies and literature reviews confirming the existence of bias against older women in the labour force (e.g., Chen, 1987; Fuller and Martin, 1980; Jonung, 1986; Mowseian, 1986; Nishio and Lank, 1987; Payne and Whittington, 1980; Shaw and Shaw, 1988; Wrightsman and Deaux, 1981). It was therefore surprising to find no significant differences in this present investigation other than in regards to the variable physical condition.

The post hoc ANOVA had indicated a significant gender bias against both older and younger women in respect to trainability, suitability of age, physical condition, and creativity. There were no interaction effects.

Once more, it is possible that the results were influenced by the use of university students as subjects. They represent a segment of the population that by and large has been made aware of bias against females. According to Querishi and Kay (1986), this group may even make a conscious effort to accommodate female applicants for jobs which are not perceived as too gender-typed.

This latter thought bears further examination. The

lack of significant gender differences could be partly a function of the type of job being filled. The position of Inventory Control Officer may be perceived as one that is gender-neutral, or easy enough for "even an older woman to do". In this case, suitability ratings for the mature woman might be no different than those for the mature man, even if generally, the respondent is more biased against older women than older men.

Finally, it is possible that the mature woman in this thesis was considered somewhat atypical for a person of her age, perhaps by reason of her having worked all of her adult life and having achieved positions that some may view as fairly responsible. Crockett et al. (1979) found that an older woman who was considered alert, interesting, and involved, was perceived as deviating from stereotypic expectations.

#### Directions for Future Research

There is a pressing need for more field investigation in the area of employment selection of older workers. Although university students are often used in such research, there are not sufficient comparative studies to confirm without a doubt that results obtained by using students can be generalized to actual employers. Such comparative studies constitute a second, related need for future research.

It is recognized that sufficient access to real organizations and to subjects outside the student pool is a

definite problem in the area of applied psychology. Reliability of results requires a large sample size, and this may be difficult to obtain away from a university setting. This problem may be even worse for a research area such as the present one. Despite assurances of anonymity, company officials might be leary of an investigation that could show their staff to be prejudiced or company hiring policies to be unfair. Not only would they be apprehensive of employee attitudes that might reflect poorly on the company, but officials might also be concerned about anyone discovering that they had broken antidiscrimination laws. Compounding matters, it could be difficult to convince officials to ask a large number of busy supervisors and managers to devote time to participate in a study that they did not perceive as being of direct benefit to their company. Even if sufficient sampling numbers can be obtained, research costs and time are likely to increase substantially when research is conducted in the field instead of in the laboratory.

Nonetheless, applied research is long overdue to expand our knowledge and our progress in this area. There are too many unknowns in using university students exclusively as subjects. Undergraduate students generally have not had much experience in the world of work. Their attitudes may change when faced with the realities of the labour market. For example, would actual employers weigh pension costs attached to hiring an older worker, or the

cost of training someone with a limited number of potential work years, more heavily than students? Would actual employers be more wary of hiring older workers because of legislation that makes it difficult to fire them later? Are systemic biases in place in large organizations that screen out many older workers independent of any attitudes toward them that the employer may personally hold? Would an employer's past direct experience with older employees influence his or her hiring decisions? These, and many other questions can only be answered by field investigation with actual employers.

The present thesis represents a preliminary, pilot study in an area largely ignored to date. Whether in the field or in the laboratory, more work should be done with résumés, as these documents are generally used to screen out applicants. If an older worker cannot advance beyond the application stage, knowing more about any other step in the selection process will do little to help him or her. This future research should manipulate types of jobs applied for. Clerical and service, technical, semi-skilled, skilled, managerial and professional jobs should all be investigated and compared. There may be industry-related differences as well, and various industries such as health care, manufacturing, or education could also be manipulated. Age of the applicant, previous work history, résumé type and content, rater characteristics, and gender of the applicants are all



factors that may contribute to employer decisions and so these should be studied. The more that is known about the variables that influence employers to invite mature candidates for an interview, the more that effective interventions can be designed.

Should an experimental design similar to the one in the present research be used, certain improvements are suggested. Preliminary work should be carried out with employers to determine all the criteria that they consider important in assessing a résumé. These criteria should be added to the questionnaire. Perhaps a way could be found to weight selection items according to their importance. The experimental procedure should include an oral debriefing of all respondents to determine exactly why they evaluated a subject the way they did. Although the present research included open-ended questions to attempt to determine this, many subjects did not articulate their reasons sufficiently well to be of benefit. Student responses could be compared with those of employers to see how closely students approximate employer thought processes. Different types of variables should also be manipulated as previously described.

#### Practical and Theoretical Relevance of These Findings

Festinger's (1957) Theory of Cognitive Dissonance predicts that prejudice, including bias against older persons, will be resistant to change even when additional information is introduced. This theory contends that

additional positive information will be misperceived, dismissed as nonfactual, or misinterpreted to be in line with original biases. The results of the present research show that additional information contradicting common negative stereotypes presented in an older applicant's résumé, regardless of applicant gender, is sufficient for the candidate to be assessed significantly more favorably than had the additional information not been presented.

The results of this study indicate that Cognitive Dissonance Theory may not accurately predict the effect of additional positive information on attitudes when older persons are perceived as individuals and not merely as target group members. It is also concluded that résumés containing additional positive information contradicting common stereotypes may be sufficient for getting employers to regard the candidates as individuals separate from the target group to which they belong and lacking the undesirable traits and behaviours often attributed to that group. Confirmation of these conclusions would require that this study, or one similar, be repeated with actual employers.

The practical implications of the findings in this present research are exciting. To date, there has only been a limited amount of research into means of assisting middle-aged and older workers to regain work once they become unemployed. Little assistance has been available in Manitoba for helping these individuals. Various programs

exist in this province aimed at reducing youth unemployment but there are few programs and services designed to help older persons (Canada Employment and Immigration, 1985; EIC & Department of Economic Security, 1987). Our federal and provincial governments have pursued instead the passive approach of providing these workers with opportunities for early retirement (Casey & Bruche, 1983). Governments and individuals are now becoming increasingly aware of the loss to the economy of pensioning off willing and qualified workers. As well, the psychological, physical, social, and financial cost to mature job seekers, and consequently, to their families and to society, cannot be ignored (Warr & Jackson, 1984). Effective interventions are required that are reasonably priced in a tight fiscal climate and easy to apply.

The present research offers some hope in this regard. Teaching older applicants how to complete a résumé that could help reduce bias would be a relatively inexpensive intervention. This could be incorporated into existing job finding clubs or job search classes taught at Employment and Immigration Centres. Writing such a résumé is a simple technique that most older job seekers could readily learn and apply. Its use need not be limited to older applicants. Other groups of people who are the subject of discrimination may also find it useful.

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Appendix A  
Subjects' Rights

Thank you for participating in this study. I remind you, however, that you are free to refuse to participate in this experiment, and may do so without penalty. You are also free to leave at any point without penalty.

Your participation in this experiment is completely anonymous. You will not be asked to indicate your name or student number on any answers that you give, and no attempt will be made to link your name with any answers given.

If you would like to receive detailed feedback on the purpose of this experiment and the results once these have been analyzed, please sign your name and full address on the sheet placed at the front of the classroom for this purpose.

Please turn the page and begin.



Appendix B  
Instructions

PLEASE READ THROUGH THIS ENTIRE PACKAGE CAREFULLY  
BEFORE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE END.

For the duration of this session, please assume that you are the owner of Ideal Parts and Filters Ltd., a small company that sells truck parts and filters. Your company has nineteen employees. Business has been increasing steadily over the last few years. Effective June 1, 1989, you will become the exclusive distributor of all Conway Manufacturing truck parts in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. This contract will result in a significant increase to your inventory, amount of business conducted, and profit. In preparation for this change, you have decided to convert your manual parts and filters inventory control system to a comprehensive computerized system. To do this, you purchased a \$40,000 micro computer and printer and a \$1000 computer software package and operating manual.

At present, two employees sell parts and perform manual inventory control duties. With the expansion, their activities will be restricted to selling, so you have

created a new position, that of Inventory Control Officer. Initially, this person will be responsible for learning to operate the computer and for transferring the current inventory data onto the new system. Thereafter, responsibilities will include ordering supplies and parts, distributing these within the company, and controlling all inventory. Some lifting will be required in the receipt and distribution of goods.

Originally, you attempted to find a person experienced in either computerized inventory control or truck parts and filters. You were unsuccessful in locating a suitable individual. You are now prepared to train a promising candidate.

You are looking for someone bright and alert who can not only master the operation of the computer, but also learn the numerous truck parts and filters, in as short a time as possible. Since computerized inventory control is new to the company, you want someone who is flexible and who can handle any problems that might arise, creatively and independently.

A copy of the job advertisement that you placed in the want ads of the local newspaper is attached as well as a copy of the job description for Inventory Control Officer.

Please review the candidate requirements and the duties of the position carefully before continuing on with this package.

APPENDIX C  
NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

WANTED

INVENTORY CONTROL OFFICER

Required by small progressive company. Will effect the transfer from a manual to a computerized system of inventory control and will be responsible for ordering, distributing, and controlling truck parts and filters. Some heavy lifting involved. No experience necessary as company will train bright, alert individual willing to learn job requiring detailed knowledge of product. Successful candidate should be in good physical condition, able to work on own, flexible, and capable of solving problems as they arise. To apply, please send résumé in confidence to BOX 951 FREE PRESS.

## Appendix D

## JOB DESCRIPTION

## INVENTORY CONTROL OFFICER

Under the direction of the Sales Manager, the Inventory Control Officer is responsible for effecting the transfer from a manual to a computerized system of inventory control and maintaining this system. This person is also responsible for the provision, distribution, and control of all equipment, parts, and supplies required for and by the company. The incumbent identifies and orders truck parts and filters; other supplies such as wordprocessors, calculators, computer software, writing materials, office manuals; and all other equipment and supplies required by the company. This position entails dealing with suppliers; receiving material from suppliers; maintaining accurate records; and distributing goods within the company. The Inventory Control Officer conducts annual and periodic inventories of stock on hand; prepares documents for computer input; and maintains a computerized inventory of suppliers, costs, stock on hand, and distribution of parts, supplies, and equipment.

Appendix E  
Further Instructions

You have received 42 applications for Inventory Control Officer trainee. You wish to interview no more than 6 candidates and to select one of these for the job.

Attached is a résumé received from one of these 42 applicants. Please read this document thoroughly to determine how suitable this individual would be as the trainee. You may refer back to the job description and newspaper advertisement, if you so desire.

When you have finished carefully evaluating the suitability of this individual for this position, please proceed to the questionnaire at the end of this package.

## Appendix F

## Résumé for Condition 1

Darrell John Cousins  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4  
Phone: 256-3658  
Age: 25 years old  
Gender: Male  
Health: Excellent

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1982-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1981-82: Assembly Line Supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and

standards of quality were met  
-prepared monthly report on performance and  
achievements  
Reason for leaving: Found better job at General  
Manufacturing

EDUCATION:

Grade XII  
George Bernard High School  
Winnipeg, Man.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing  
Swimming  
Reading

REFERENCES:

Available on request



## Appendix G

## Résumé for Condition 2

Lana Inglis  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4  
Phone: 256-3658  
Age: 25 years old  
Gender: Female  
Health: Excellent

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1982-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1981-82: Assembly Line Supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and

standards of quality were met  
-prepared monthly report on performance and  
achievements  
Reason for leaving: Found better job at General  
Manufacturing

EDUCATION:

Grade XII  
George Bernard High School  
Winnipeg, Man.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing  
Swimming  
Reading

REFERENCES:

Available on request

## Appendix H

## Résumé for Condition 3

Joseph James Tippet  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4  
Phone: 256-3658  
Age: 55 years old  
Gender: Male  
Health: Excellent

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1979-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1970-79: Assembly Line Supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and

standards of quality were met  
 -prepared monthly report on performance and  
 achievements  
 Reason for leaving: Found better job at General  
 Manufacturing

1951-70: Eaton's  
 320 Portage  
 Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:  
 Various positions in warehouse, offices, and  
 retail store

EDUCATION:

Grade XII  
 George Bernard High School  
 Winnipeg, Man.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing  
 Swimming  
 Reading

REFERENCES:

Available on request

## Appendix I

## Résumé for Condition 4

Mary Jane Watson  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4  
Phone: 256-3658  
Age: 55 years old  
Gender: Female  
Health: Excellent

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1979-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1970-79: Assembly Line Supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and

standards of quality were met  
-prepared monthly report on performance and  
achievements  
Reason for leaving: Found better job at General  
Manufacturing

1951-70: Eaton's  
320 Portage  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:  
Various positions in warehouse, offices, and  
retail store

EDUCATION:

Grade XII  
George Bernard High School  
Winnipeg, Man.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing  
Swimming  
Reading

REFERENCES:

Available on request

## Appendix J

## Résumé for Condition 5

Craig Robert Campbell  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4

Phone: 256-3658

Age: 25 years old

Gender: Male

Health: Excellent

I have only missed two days of work because of illness in the past three years.

I exercise regularly and am in very good physical condition.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1982-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company
- performed various other duties as required, such as special projects or assisting when other staff were away

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1981-82: Assembly Line Supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and standards of quality were met
- prepared monthly report on performance and achievements

Reason for leaving: Found better job at General Manufacturing

EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION:

Grade XII - George Bernard High School  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work-related instruction:

I have always strived to keep abreast of recent developments in whatever field of work I am in.

This has entailed seeking out and reading on my own time numerous books and articles related to my work.

I have also attended workshops, seminars, and training sessions whenever these have been available.

Other instruction:

I enjoy acquiring new knowledge and the challenge of learning new skills.

I try to expand my knowledge in a number of areas through reading a variety of nonfiction books and magazines and watching selected documentaries on T.V.

I have taught myself various skills such as typing, painting, and refinishing furniture.



LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing  
Swimming 1/2 a mile, twice a week  
Reading both for enjoyment and for  
acquiring new knowledge  
Scrabble and crossword puzzles

SPECIAL SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

I was greatly commended by my last employer for a system I designed for collecting statistics required for monitoring productivity and cost. I received a large bonus for this.  
In the last two years, two of my suggestions for improving productivity in the plant were adopted.

REFERENCES:

Available on request

## Appendix K

## Résumé for Condition 6

Lisa Michelle Parker  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4

Phone: 256-3658

Age: 25 years old

Gender: Female

Health: Excellent

I have only missed two days of work because of illness in the past three years.

I exercise regularly and am in very good physical condition.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1982-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company
- performed various other duties as required, such as special projects or assisting when other staff were away

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1981-82: Assembly Line Supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and standards of quality were met
- prepared monthly report on performance and achievements

Reason for leaving: Found better job at General Manufacturing

EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION:

Grade XII - George Bernard High School  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work-related instruction:

I have always strived to keep abreast of recent developments in whatever field of work I am in.

This has entailed seeking out and reading on my own time numerous books and articles related to my work.

I have also attended workshops, seminars, and training sessions whenever these have been available.

Other instruction:

I enjoy acquiring new knowledge and the challenge of learning new skills.

I try to expand my knowledge in a number of areas through reading a variety of nonfiction books and magazines and watching selected documentaries on T.V.

I have taught myself various skills such as typing, painting, and refinishing furniture.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing  
Swimming 1/2 a mile, twice a week  
Reading both for enjoyment and for  
acquiring new knowledge  
Scrabble and crossword puzzles

SPECIAL SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

I was greatly commended by my last employer  
for a system I designed for collecting  
statistics required for monitoring  
productivity and cost. I received a large  
bonus for this.  
In the last two years, two of my suggestions  
for improving productivity in the plant were  
adopted.

REFERENCES:

Available on request

Appendix L  
Résumé for Condition 7

Thomas George Johnson  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4

Phone: 256-3658

Age: 55 years old

Gender: Male

Health: Excellent

I have only missed two days of work because of illness in the past three years.

I exercise regularly and am in very good physical condition.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1979-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company
- performed various other duties as required, such as special projects or assisting when other staff were away

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1970-79: Assembly line supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and

standards of quality were met  
-prepared monthly report on performance and achievements

Reason for leaving: Found better job at General Manufacturing

1951-70: Eaton's  
320 Portage  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:

Various positions in warehouse, offices, and retail store

#### EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION:

Grade XII - George Bernard High School  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work-related instruction:

I have always strived to keep abreast of recent developments in whatever field of work I am in.

This has entailed seeking out and reading on my own time numerous books and articles related to my work.

I have also attended workshops, seminars, and training sessions whenever these have been available.

Other instruction:

I enjoy acquiring new knowledge and the challenge of learning new skills.

I try to expand my knowledge in a number of areas through reading a variety of nonfiction books and magazines and watching selected documentaries on T.V.

I have taught myself various skills such as typing, painting, and refinishing furniture.

#### LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing

Swimming 1/2 a mile, twice a week

Reading both for enjoyment and for acquiring new knowledge

Scrabble and crossword puzzles

SPECIAL SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

I was greatly commended by my last employer for a system I designed for collecting statistics required for monitoring productivity and cost.

I received a large bonus for this.

In the last two years, two of my suggestions for improving productivity in the plant were adopted.

REFERENCES:

Available on request

## Appendix M

## Résumé for Condition 8

Janice Mowatt  
101 St. Michael's Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R2M 3N4

Phone: 256-3658

Age: 55 years old

Gender: Female

Health: Excellent

I have only missed two days of work because of illness in the past three years.

I exercise regularly and am in very good physical condition.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

1979-88: Production Officer  
General Manufacturing  
660 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- supervised 3 staff members
- set up a system for collecting statistics required for production and cost measurement
- compiled weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on production and costs for the management team
- maintained and ordered all supplies for the administrative and support sections of the company
- performed various other duties as required, such as special projects or assisting when other staff were away

Reason for leaving: Plant closed

1970-79: Assembly line supervisor  
Tassa Plastics  
800 Dawson Road  
Winnipeg, Man.

## Work duties:

- in charge of schedules and assigning of duties
- responsible for training assembly line workers on new projects
- responsible for ensuring that quotas and standards of quality were met



-prepared monthly report on performance and achievements

Reason for leaving: Found better job at General Manufacturing

1951-70: Eaton's  
320 Portage  
Winnipeg, Man.

Work duties:  
Various positions in warehouse, offices, and retail store

#### EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION:

Grade XII - George Bernard High School  
Winnipeg, Man.

##### Work-related instruction:

I have always strived to keep abreast of recent developments in whatever field of work I am in.

This has entailed seeking out and reading on my own time numerous books and articles related to my work.

I have also attended workshops, seminars, and training sessions whenever these have been available.

##### Other instruction:

I enjoy acquiring new knowledge and the challenge of learning new skills.

I try to expand my knowledge in a number of areas through reading a variety of nonfiction books and magazines and watching selected documentaries on T.V.

I have taught myself various skills such as typing, painting, and refinishing furniture.

#### LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS:

Golfing

Swimming 1/2 a mile, twice a week

Reading both for enjoyment and for acquiring new knowledge

Scrabble and crossword puzzles

#### SPECIAL SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

I was greatly commended by my last employer for a system I designed for collecting statistics required for monitoring productivity and cost.

I received a large bonus for this.

In the last two years, two of my suggestions for improving productivity in the plant were adopted.

REFERENCES:

Available on request

Appendix N  
Candidate Evaluation Questionnaire

RATER INFORMATION:

1. Have you ever had any experience hiring workers?

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, approximately how many workers have you  
hired? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your sex? \_\_\_\_\_

JOB APPLICANT INFORMATION:

4. What is the name of the job applicant you are  
evaluating in this study? \_\_\_\_\_
5. In a few sentences, please describe your impression  
of this job applicant.

6. You will interview no more than 6 candidates out of a total of 42 who applied for this position. What is the likelihood that you would select this applicant for an interview? (Check one)

\_\_\_\_\_Very unlikely

\_\_\_\_\_Unlikely

\_\_\_\_\_Neither unlikely nor likely

\_\_\_\_\_Likely

\_\_\_\_\_Very likely

7. Why did you arrive at this decision?

8. The following factors may be important in determining suitability for the position of Inventory Control Officer trainee. Please indicate how suitable you feel this candidate is in each of these areas using the following scale:

1 = very suitable; 2 = suitable;  
3 = neither suitable nor unsuitable;  
4 = unsuitable; 5 = very unsuitable.

\_\_\_\_\_overall suitability  
\_\_\_\_\_trainability  
\_\_\_\_\_education  
\_\_\_\_\_skills  
\_\_\_\_\_flexibility  
\_\_\_\_\_previous experience  
\_\_\_\_\_age  
\_\_\_\_\_physical condition  
\_\_\_\_\_intelligence and mental alertness  
\_\_\_\_\_motivation  
\_\_\_\_\_creativity in problem-solving  
\_\_\_\_\_other (please specify)

Note: Please ensure that each of the preceding factors is rated on a scale of 1 to 5 as indicated above.

9. How would you describe this candidate's résumé?

(Check one)

\_\_\_\_\_Very unimpressive

\_\_\_\_\_Unimpressive

\_\_\_\_\_Neither unimpressive nor impressive

\_\_\_\_\_Impressive

\_\_\_\_\_Very impressive