

**EFFECTIVE JOB PREPARATION: THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL  
CAREER TRANSITION DURING MIDLIFE**

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**SHIRLEY MORTON-BAILEY**

EFFECTIVE JOB PREPARATION: THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL  
CAREER TRANSITION DURING MIDLIFE

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Master of Science

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by  
Shirley Morton-Bailey

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To the Graduate and Research Council:

I am submitting herewith a research paper written by Shirley Morton-Bailey entitled "Effective Job Preparation: The Key to Successful Career Transition During Midlife." I have examined the final copy of this paper for form and content, and I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science, with a major in Guidance and Counseling.

Jean G Lewis  
Major Professor

Accepted for the Graduate and  
Research Council:

William H. Ellis  
Dean of the Graduate School

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Analysis of the Research

As we approach the twenty-first century, the trend in our society is a movement from industrialization toward high technology. This change has effected strong competition within the work force, thus causing many midlife people to contemplate job transitions in order to remain productive in the work force. The need for effective job preparation is essential for smooth job transition whether the midlife person is entering the work force for the first time or is pursuing a new career.

Review of the literature indicates that career development is a major concern of researchers. Therefore, much attention is focused on the ways midlifers can prepare for successful career transition and the role of the counselor in facilitating career development.

Robbins (1978) views change in terms of midlife transition instead of crisis because a crisis suggests a combination of a rapid change and an ample change in personality dynamics, presumably causing significant pain. Robbins explains that some people do experience pain, but the term "transition" would probably be most accurate for most people. She also suggests that being better prepared

to cope with the inevitability of change may cause fewer people midlife crisis.

Studies show that career development is an ongoing process consistent with adult development. That is, as the individual continues to change and grow, one will make occupational choices throughout one's developmental career cycle. Okum (1984) reflects on the concept that the norm is no longer a pattern of choosing an occupation in one's early twenties and remaining in that particular occupation until retirement, but that people make career transitions often during the middle years and that many such changes result from chance and experience rather than from a previous choice.

Whereas the concept of career change of people changing jobs was viewed as maladaptive behavior in the past, the concept of changing jobs is an acceptable practice in our society as societal attitudes and economic situations have changed. The literature on midcareer change has grown as the phenomenon has become more normal in our society (Okum, 1984).

A treatise by Robbins (1978) discusses the midlife transition as being one of the major transitional periods in adult development which begins about age 40 and lasts for about four to six years. The primary developmental task of a transitional period is to terminate the existing structure and to work toward the initiation of a new structure.

Zunker (1981) views this phase in life as a time of crisis and suggests that job change during this period may be linked to other changes that are occurring in the midlife individual's growth. Many are trying to get a handle on the physical and emotional changes that may be occurring. Some may be experiencing moods of emptiness because the children have left home or are beginning to leave home. Women may begin to reevaluate their lives and begin to ask themselves, "Where do I go from here." Menopause is often associated with changes of behavior in middle-aged women. Men generally experience a decline in muscular coordination and sexual activity. For both sexes, the awareness of aging and the passage of time may be the most difficult adjustment they have to cope with during this period in life. It is evident that some change may take place during midlife, and some writers suggest that a career change may be symptomatic of a psychological midlife crisis.

Barbara Newman (1982) views crisis based on psychosocial therapy and explains crisis in reference to a normal set of stresses and strains instead of a set of extraordinary events. Newman discusses crisis in the context of stages of development. The theoretical implication is that at each stage of development society makes certain "psychic demands" upon us. As we reach the apex of a stage, we must work toward obtaining resolutions



and must also conform to the demands imposed on us by society.

Newman (1982) emphasizes the concept of "normative life crisis" as having significant implications for the study of adult development. She states that as one makes the transition from one stage to another, there will be periods of increased uncertainty about one's capacity to meet coming demands and possibly some resistance to leaving the stability of an earlier stage. The three implications of the notion of normative crisis as explained by Newman (1982) are:

1. that anxiety can serve as a signal and even as a motivational force for work which is necessary in order for growth to continue.
2. that the resolution of each life stage involves some balance between the positive and negative poles of the crisis.
3. that positive resolution of earlier crisis may make later crisis easier to resolve, but that is not necessarily the case.

It is important to be able to provide those adults who are experiencing tension in their efforts to resolve the crisis of intimacy, generativity, and integrity with both the historical perspective and the personal skills that will permit them to evolve a life pattern that is personally fulfilling (Newman, 1982).

Although a career change may be symptomatic of a psychological midlife crisis, other issues relating to job transition cannot be ignored. For instance, job dissatisfaction during midlife is also a prime motivator for seeing different careers. Being in a job that an individual does not like or that is unsuited to the person's skills can also present problems for the person which can lead to a sense of emptiness because some needs are not being met. This can lead to stress and anxiety or a lack of fulfillment.

Zunker (1981) cites Senick in describing the unfulfilled worker as searching for autonomy, challenge, and meaning in work who lists the motives for changing careers as being centered around a combination of the following:

1. a change in needs (to higher order needs) and subsequent restructuring of goals from the time of the original career commitment;
2. a recognized disparity between current work content and reformulated goals;
3. a lack of conformity between personal goals and organizational or employer policies and goals;
4. a recognized disparity between self-perceived abilities and the utilization of these abilities in the current work environment;
5. a feeling of isolation resulting from a lack of conformity with goals and values of peer affiliates or the information organization; and,
6. a feeling of a lack of accomplishment from what has been achieved in the past and the potential for the future.

Zunker (1981) also noted that the relationship of obsolescence to career crisis has been a major concern in recent research. Obsolescence as defined by Kaufmann in Zunker (1981) "is the degree to which organizational professionals lack up-to-date knowledge of skills necessary to maintain effective performance in either their current or future work roles." Zunker (1981) explored some of the reasons attributed to obsolescence. These reasons included:

1. the almost revolutionary changes in industrialized organizations in the last two decades through highly technological advances and changes in the mode of production. This change has resulted in the need for immediate technical skills conducive to the technological advances.

2. The changes in training needed for some occupations has been so rapid that individuals who have just completed training may find that the training they have is obsolete and that they are not knowledgeable about novel advances and changes in their profession. The same demands for retraining and upgrading of skills in order to meet the demand of technological change are also prevalent for employees in many lower level occupations.

3. Implied causes of obsolescence cannot be generalized but one's ability and motivation seems to be the primary determinant. For instance, one's inability to gain new



knowledge may limit one's ability to learn new job skills that are required for performing and learning new job elements. Though obsolescence is not necessarily related to age, one may become less motivated due to a decrease in initiative and energy as time passes.

4. The traditional view that one should pursue only one career in a life time is another factor related to the cause of obsolescence. This view is still largely accepted in our society.

For the person who is totally dependent on one salary, the risk involved in job transition cannot be ignored. For instance, if there is some security in the present job, is it worth the risk to venture out into a new career? One has to consider such factors as a sluggish economy which may cause tremendous layoffs. In this instance, job seniority is important. Or if there is a probationary period, performance may not be at an acceptable level at the termination of the probationary period. This could result in being terminated from the position.

Literature by Perosa and Perosa (1983) suggests that if one feels that there are critical risks involved if one changes careers, then the chances of finding more feasible solutions are doubtful. If one does not have much time to look for a job, then one can become stagnated. Therefore, considerable preparation should be made. The

situation should be weighed carefully and consideration of the options that can be pursued should not be overlooked. Careful planning and study should incorporate the major changes that are occurring in the profession the individual is considering.

Fasig and Dowling (1983) developed a problem-solving process for career development which can encircle all angles during any stage of the individual transition or change. Their process helps one to evaluate the different concepts one has generated and the projected alternatives one may have by following certain paths. These paths as listed by Fasig and Dowling are:

1. Mess. When one feels a problem exists, senses a need for a transition, experiences some anxiety but cannot clearly identify the source of these feelings, that is when one comes to the realization that one will make a career transition.
2. Fact-finding forms the basis for identifying why the person feels the need for a career transition.
3. Problem-solving where the problem is redefined. The person gains perspective on what obstacles may be involved. Redefinition of the problem may reveal other problems or the defined problem may not be the real problem or the problem that needs immediate attention.
4. Idea-finding. Ideas are generated that help the person develop alternatives. This involves creativity

and a non-judgmental research for possible solutions to problem-solving. Emotions are also considered concerning projected implementation of ideas or solutions.

5. Solution-finding. This phase allows the person to look at the negative and positive consequences of promising solutions to the problem. Some ideas may be good but may not be feasible for others involved, such as family members who may be affected by solution implementation.

6. Acceptance-finding makes the person weigh possible failures against the possible successes. The person is also forced to look at the who, what, where, and when aspects for successful implementation of plans. That is, who else must be involved and how might their support be obtained; what factors must be considered in order to gain the greatest acceptance before solution implementation; where can other resources be obtained if needed; and when would those involved be more open or receptive for suggesting solution implementation or goal setting.

7. Implementation. At this stage the person is guided toward making a commitment regarding solving the problem. This involves stating specifically what will be done within a specific time limit. This can be done by setting obtainable goals.

When setting goals for making a career change, one should consider the type of work for which one is best



suited. Therefore, one should carefully examine one's feelings about what type of work one would do best.

Bolles (1984) emphasized that studies have revealed that one's interests, wishes, and happiness are better determinants of how well one will perform than one's comprehension or ability. If one does work that one enjoys and to the best of one's ability, one will do an excellent job and be facilitating to others. Finally, no measurement or form of analysis exists that can accurately measure what one wants as asking one or having one ask oneself.

Dorchrman, Davis-Sacks, French, and Vinokur (1983) emphasize that one should be suited for the job environment. One will have the incentive to leave an environment which does not satisfy one's needs and which makes demands which cannot be met, only if there is some environment available that can better satisfy one's needs. Therefore, the need for counselors to provide a basic framework for their clients in facilitating their career development is important.

Kaye (1982) saw career development as stage development that progresses sequentially through six stages. These six stages are:

Stage 1. Preparation is the stage when the organization responds to a perceived need. The two processes involved at this stage are analysis and planning, which include analyzing needs and demands, formulating proposals to address these needs, stating major aims, setting goals for

implementing programs, and analyzing the methods to be used for making the program successful.

Stage 2. Profiling involves the process of identification and reality testing. Identification involves doing an inventory of one's skills, values, interests, and desired work environments. Reality testing involves making improvements, modifications, and verifications in order to help the individual gain a better concept of self.

Stage 3. Targeting, which involves the process of exploration and specification, helps the individual develop the information gained from profiling in order to choose suitable career goals. In exploration the individual is guided in selecting simultaneous options for mobility within the organization or outside the present work environment. Specification moves the individual toward stating specific goals and goal testing to ensure that the goals stated are realistic goals and attainable.

Stage 4. Strategizing involves formulating a plan of action for attaining the goals. Two processes are involved in strategizing.

1. Understanding the system which involves an individual's effort to accurately comprehend possible growth within an environment and the factors that influence life.

2. Synthesizing information which involves formulating a plan of action for goal implementation.

Stage 5. Execution involves gaining the resources necessary for attaining the goals once they are implemented, and using these newly acquired abilities within the environment.

Stage 6. Integration, which builds on the execution stage, helps the individual actually put the plans into action by moving toward attaining the specified goals. Therefore, career development helps the individual gain insight about existing conditions and insight about the career organizations of the present and the future in order to be productive in the future and to maintain job satisfaction.

Career reassessment is also a very important factor for some people in midlife and development should focus on helping those in midlife redefine their values and goals. Therefore, the realities of middle age are important considerations where work management is concerned. Many fail to anticipate the effects of aging on work performance and are surprised and caught off guard when they first begin to experience these effects.

Another area of interest discussed in the literature was how to guide the individual in midlife toward looking at career transition realistically and choosing a career in which one is able to function effectively. Okum (1984) examined some of these issues as follows:



1. Health and physical changes certainly affect individual work choices and performance.
2. Someone might find himself or herself tiring more from extensive travel and might need to change jobs in order to spend more time at home than on the road.
3. Others might find that teaching and supervising are more suited to their midlife stamina than actually practicing their profession.

Other problems arise when there is a lack of trained counselors within an organization who can assist individuals in midlife plan certain strategies that can facilitate them in job transition within the organization or to help them develop better skills. Career development programs within organizations aid employees in gaining the skills necessary for improving their job qualifications and upgrading their job standards. Zunker (1981) lists two major purposes of these programs: "(1) to meet the individual's needs through systematic career planning; and, (2) to meet the organizational needs through effective productivity."

Another important factor in career development for midlife career changers is understanding the function of the resumé. A resumé is a summation of one's qualifications and skills related to the job market. Bolles (1984) lists four different functions of resúmes.

1. They can serve as a skills inventory to help one to organize all one's accomplishments in one's lifetime before looking for a job.

2. They can serve as an "extended calling card" with the intention of getting one asked for an interview.

3. They can serve as a guideline for the interview by aiding the interviewer in inquiring about the interviewee during an interview.

4. Resumes can help the employer reflect back on things that were discussed during the interview.

Bolles (1984), however, had some criticisms of the use of resumé's as an extended calling card. These criticisms were:

Some actually benefit from a resumé by getting an interview and as a result get the job whereas many others who are seeking jobs do not get a job by sending a resumé. The ones who get the job discusses this a lot whereas the ones who do not get the job talks very little about it. Therefore, this has caused a false belief in society that the resumé is instrumental in obtaining jobs. This can be damaging to one's self concept if one doesn't understand and can't accept the fact that resumé's do not guarantee gaining a job.

Career development cited in the literature includes knowledge in the use of standardized assessment and how this assessment can be applied to assist people in midlife to identify their interests. This can be done with the use of interest inventories in which the individual's interests are indicated or characterized by their responses to grouped lists of occupations and activities correlated with their professions. The rationale is that individuals having similar interests patterns to those found in an

occupational group would more likely find satisfaction in that particular group (Zunker, 1981). The most extensively used interest inventories are the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory and the Kuder Interest Inventory (Zunker, 1981).

### The Role of Women in the Work Force

Based on the literature, very few empirical studies have concentrated on the psychological development of women. Most studies have focused on the psychological development of men. The literature further disclosed very few empirical studies on women in the work force, which may be a function of the idea that developing meaningful careers for women may be postponed because of marriage, childbirth, and rearing children, whereas men are concentrating on their careers during this time. Therefore, a woman's task at the midlife transition is to move out into the world, whereas a man's is usually to deal with the interior, with the feelings and emotions he has so carefully ignored all these years (Robbins, 1978).

Rapid inflation and movement toward high technology and social changes have caused a shift in the private and economic possessions of individuals. These changes, incorporated with an extended recession, altered the life-style of many and threatened the economic security of many. As a result, the American family as an institution



did not remain invulnerable to change which has caused women to move into the work force (Appelbaum, 1981).

Since women have devoted much of their mature lives to being homemaker and mother, they often find themselves in low level occupations. Some lack sufficient training and experience that would allow them to enter into upper level positions. Therefore, women tend to enter the work force in clerical positions.

Rejecting the struggle for promotions by women who tend to enter the establishment mostly in clerical positions, women are also faced with other difficulties. Well qualified and capable women find themselves in positions with limited or nonexistent promotion ladders. Faced with dim prospects for advancement, these women come to exhibit characteristic irregular employment histories (Shaw, 1986).

D'Amico (cited in Shaw, 1986) provided documentation based on National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Market Experience of Mature Women (NSL), women ages 45-59, working in 1982 and Current Population Survey (CPS). His study showed that about 7.6 percent of NLS women working in 1982 were managers or administrators, all of whom can be assumed to exercise authority in the work place. Shaw (1986) also found that just under 30 percent of non-self-employed, currently employed women reported they supervise the work of others, and that most of them direct

the work tasks of fewer than ten people; only 6.4 percent supervised more than ten people; and only 1.6 percent supervised more than thirty workers. The final results showed that only about 9 percent of the NSL sample of employed women reported they had any say over the pay or promotion of others according to Shaw (1986).

Giele (1978) also suggested that women's current involvement in the work force is a natural result of more than a century of change in the roles of women. She stressed that women in staff supervisory positions seek recognition in the middle and top levels of management and that professional women are demanding equal access and promotional opportunities. These steps have resulted from large scale institutional change in the country at large, as well as the efforts of women themselves.

Appelbaum (1981) conducted a study relative to activities that enhance mature women's reentry into the work force. His subjects were white women who were in their early forties and fifties in 1976. The empirical evidence showed that there were important differences in labor market positions (measured by wages and prestige status of the job) among these women which could be directly traced to the preparation they had made for a career. This preparation included years of schooling which increased both wages and prestige in 1972. Post-school investment in human capital was also effective in increasing wages and prestige.

Appelbaum (1981) also found that another major influence on wage and prestige positions of women after they reenter the labor force is the kinds of jobs they held in the early stages of their working lives, prior to leaving employment. Even after controlling for differences in education and socioeconomic background, Appelbaum found that women who held better jobs before they left also held better jobs after returning to work. There is an important role for vocational guidance to play in helping young women in the early stages of their careers to make decisions that will not penalize them at later stages in the life cycle.

Women in dual-career couple situations where both the husband and wife work can often find themselves caught up in certain career dilemmas. These dilemmas can exist between the couple and between the couple and societal norms. Society at large still views the woman as being responsible for caring for the family. The responsibility of caring for the children is viewed as the woman's role. Any deviation from the norm can seem threatening to the institution of the family by neighbors.

Rapoport and Rapoport (cited in O'Neil et al., 1987) give three situations which imply that career and family transitions activate normative dilemmas. These situations are:



1. transition points in the career life cycle of either parties (i.e., career transitions);
2. transitions in the family life cycle; and,
3. events in the life space of the children.

The engendering of nontraditional life styles and the changes in the economic situation due to rising inflation, rising divorce rates, women's struggle for equal rights, and increased life span due to the advances in modern technology, all have had serious implications on the conventional work behavior. Whereas work was viewed as gratifying survival needs with the male being the sole bread winner, women no longer can depend solely on marriage for economic security for life. They may stay single, become divorced or widowed, or may have to work in order to subsidize the family income. Thus, virtually all women today need to pay for the contingency of taking paid employment outside the home according to Astin (1984).

The move away from the traditional work behavior will also increase the tendency of career change in the future. The need for expanding knowledge about career change will grow. Government policies will need to focus on ways to refine hiring feasibility for midlife workers. Refinement must also occur in our colleges where training plans will focus on preparing the middle-aged students with the training necessary to pursue their career transitions. Organizations must also strive toward gathering knowledge

that will promote effective job training programs for mature adults so they can become more useful to the organization, thereby increasing the overall effectiveness of the organization.

## CHAPTER 2

### Methodology

#### Hypothesis

Within-agency job training programs will enrich job performance of midlife career changers; therefore, job performance and productivity will be enhanced during this period resulting in a smoother transition for the individual.

#### Rationale

A review of the literature revealed an emphasis on career development and the ways midlifers can prepare for successful career transition and the role of the counselor during career development. The literature did not focus on the difficulties that can be encountered by midlife changers after they have entered new positions. Within-agency programs might alleviate much stress encountered by an individual entering a new position. These programs would encourage proper training which might reduce productivity time lost due to errors, reduce funds lost due to inaccuracies, and reduce overtime due to productivity lag.

Increased job performance and productivity might increase job satisfaction, which would lead to a reduction in time lost in sick leave due to stress and other emotional problems, and increase organizational



effectiveness which would be cost effective to the employee and the organization. Job satisfaction could also improve employer/employee relationships and cause increased ability and increased efficiency.

Though targeted for employees in midlife, this type of program can be effective for all age groups whether entering the work force for the first time or reentering the work force.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this survey would be to look at job performance in relation to organizational effectiveness in order to determine whether a need exists for an effective job training program which would result in more effective job performance, more organizational effectiveness, and lower stress level.

In order to determine whether there is a need for more effective job training, questionnaires could be given to employees of five activities. The activities chosen are federal activities. A cross-section of job characteristics would need to be compiled in this questionnaire. The questionnaire would then be given to all employees age 30 and over within each activity within a specific category (entry level GS-03 - GS-05), which would allow for heterogeneity in terms of occupation, tenure, and so forth.

The major goals of program implementation include:

1. Better communication between employer and employees.

2. Higher performance evaluation.
3. Better skills and more effective job performance.
4. Decreased sick leave among employees.
5. Reduction in union interventions and work hours lost due to consultation with union representatives and employees by approximately 50 percent within the first four years with decreased reduction thereafter.

The major aims of program implementation include:

1. Retain a counselor within each agency that has a population of 50 people or more.

2. Select instructors/trainers for a training program.

3. Implement a two-week classroom type training program for each position whether lateraled into or promoted into.

- a. These classes could be for two hours per day for a period of two weeks.

- b. Use persons who are fully acquainted with the procedure of the job as trainers.

4. Implement a follow-up system after three months of work to look for existing problems in performance.

- a. If problems other than of a minor nature still exist, screen employee to make sure that the job is suited to the employee.

- b. If the job is not suited to the employee, look for alternatives.

5. Have monthly meetings with employers and employees to discuss difficulties and grievances in an open, non-critical, non-judgmental manner without fear of reprimand.

6. Have pre-performance evaluations where employees can become aware of areas that need improvement before final annual evaluation.

Once it has been established that the training program's projected outcome is worth the costs that would be involved in getting such a program initiated and would be cost effective to both employees and the government in the future, other areas of discussion to be considered include:

1. Facilities should be provided and training should be held in private rooms removed from the work setting. The program would be designed to develop the capability of the employee and should provide the kind of assistance necessary for the employee's maximum performance.

2. What management hopes employees can achieve and realistically be able to accomplish in reference to increased job efficiency, decreased absenteeism, higher performance appraisals, should be discussed.

If the job is not suited to the employee, management could help the employee look for alternatives because the type of work that a person is engaged in can limit performance if it is not suited to the employee, and this could limit skill use, creativity, and responsibility.



5. The use of job performance appraisals can be used not only as an incentive, but also as a reward.

6. The development of pre-performance feedback could serve as a means for detecting errors that could cue both employer and the employee on the necessary elements that the employee needs to work on improving. This could make more sense of what needs improvement and both could get a better understanding as to why that particular evaluation was given.

### Method

Population. Employees who are currently employed in federal positions in entry level GS-03 through GS-05 positions on military installations.

Subjects. One hundred twenty-five employees from within five randomly selected agencies. Twenty-five employees could be selected from each agency. The group should be heterogeneous in regard to sex or race.

Instrument. The instrument used would be a fourteen question, self-administered, paper and pencil questionnaire. The questions should be a mixture of open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questions should be structured to assess the need for within-agency training programs for midlife employees entering new positions. An example of a survey instrument is presented in Appendix I.

Procedure. The researcher should present a proposal to the proper command. The researcher would then meet with management to discuss what management hoped employees

could achieve and realistically be able to accomplish in reference to increased job efficiency, decreased absenteeism, and higher performance appraisals. Discussion might include whether the projected training program outcomes are worth the costs that would be involved in implementing the program.

Once this has been decided, the researcher would need to meet with the employees to discuss the purpose of the survey, the ethical issues involved, and other aspects of the survey.

## CHAPTER 3

### Discussion

The rapidity of technological changes in our society will continue to cause midlife people to contemplate job transitions in order to remain productive in the work force. The changing traditional roles of the family, as well as changes in governmental and societal policies and priorities, will contribute to career transition. The incidence of longevity and healthier lives will also contribute to career transition during midlife. It is important, therefore, that we continue studies on career transition during midlife.

In order to learn as much as possible about career change during midlife, studies such as the one suggested need to be implemented. Effective job preparation is necessary for successful career transition; however, once the transition is made, within-agency training programs might help the midlifer adjust more quickly. The midlifer's productivity might increase at a faster rate and the skills acquired in job preparation would be enhanced. Preparation that was made prior to entering the work force may not be adequate or may be outdated due to the significant changes of modern technology. Therefore,



development after the transition has been made is as essential as preparation before the transition.

Within-agency training might alleviate the uncertainty associated with transition. The technical skills needed to complement technological advances might also be increased. This probably would enable individuals to cope with the accelerated changes that occur in certain occupations.

Trained counselors within organizations could further assist individuals in midlife to develop strategies that would help them reach career goals. Successful performance appraisals and improved job qualifications could increase chances of promotion to higher level positions.

It is evident that career change has become a way of meeting the growing needs of the family as well as the needs of the individual. Therefore, career change can no longer be perceived as a time of crisis in the life of a midlife individual, but rather as a means of coping with the governmental and societal priorities that exist in our society.

Studies in the area of within-agency training would be valuable in pinpointing the different needs of the midlife individual as compared to the younger individual, and adjustments could be made to ensure that midlife individuals are able to produce as well as the younger individuals. The organization would be aware of any trouble spots which might indicate whether or not the individual is suited for

the type of work during the initial phase of the transition. For instance, is the individual's health and physical changes that are occurring conducive to that particular environment? Is the job tiring to the individual?

Within-agency training might be beneficial to midlife women who have devoted most of their mature lives to homemaking and mothering and are stuck in occupations of low level. Since some of these women lack sufficient training and experience which would allow them to enter into higher level positions, within-agency training might encourage well qualified midlife women to gain skills necessary for advancement within the organization.

## CHAPTER 4

### Conclusion

The potential value of within-agency training should be investigated. Its success might advance studies done in the area of career development in that it might increase the skills for disadvantaged employees and those with limited educational backgrounds. The literature focuses primarily on data collected from the white middle class populace. Maintaining the concept that many social (ills) injustices can be attributed to one's inability to perform successfully in certain jobs, careful consideration of within-agency training could be an added resource for organizations and society.

With the focus of society being toward a high technological society, more disadvantaged people will be forced out of the work main stream, thereby putting an added burden on the current work force and a strain on the limited resources at society's disposal to care for these people. Therefore, within-agency training could make a significant contribution to the literature if this training is focused at target groups such as midlife individuals, the socially disadvantaged, and other groups who could benefit from such training.



It is evidenced by the literature that preparation made prior to entering the work force may not be sufficient due to the sophisticated changes of modern technology, therefore, new areas of preparation for successful midlife job transition must be considered.

If incorporated into the literature, within-agency training during job transition for midlifers might foster increased skills, greater opportunities, and increased self-esteem; raise the potential for better job performance; and increase the chances for better and faster promotions, thus producing a more self-sufficient society.

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## APPENDIX A

### Survey

The purpose of this survey is to determine whether there is a need for an effective job training program within your agency for midlife individuals beginning new positions. In order to execute the study, your voluntary participation is desired. Please return the completed questionnaire to the mail box in your mail room.

1. What is your sex? M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many years of tenure? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many years in present position? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are there any existing training programs in your agency for employees starting in new jobs?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, specify what type:

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5. Do you feel that the training offered by existing programs adequately prepared you for your present position?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

6. Is there any remedial training offered in your agency? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you feel totally efficient in your present position: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you enjoy your work? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you feel comfortable with your supervisor?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

10. What is your job title? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is your grade? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Would you like to see a more effective job training program implemented for employees starting new positions within your agency? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is your age? 30-39 \_\_\_\_\_ 40 and over \_\_\_\_\_

14. If you were requested to give your name, would you have answered any of these questions differently?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you!