The Role of Person–Organisation Fit in Attraction and Selection Decisions

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ABSTRACT

Schneider's Attraction–Selection–Attrition cycle (ASA; Schneider, 1987) is one of the most influential models in the person–organisation (P–O) fit literature. The main idea in this framework is that organisations attract, select, and retain those people who share their values. Schneider (1987) argues that this cycle creates homogeneity in the type of people employed by the organisation. He predicts that over time this homogeneity is dysfunctional for organisations, as they become increasingly ingrown and resistant to change.

The first part of this study contains a literature review. These chapters position Schneider's ASA cycle within the wider P–O fit literature and review the studies that have considered features of the cycle. In brief summary, these studies have found the predicted homogeneity of values amongst organisational employees. The attrition phase of the cycle has received much research attention and researchers have demonstrated the attrition effect with people who do not share the values of organisations leaving them. In contrast, the attraction and selection phases of the cycle have received much less attention and there have been no direct tests of these propositions. The main study, which is reported in the third part of this thesis, is a direct test of Schneider's attraction and selection propositions. The results reject Schneider's attraction proposition that organisations attract people who share their values. However, the results suggest that the value congruence between people is more influential than the value congruence between people and environments in predicting selection outcomes.

To enable these direct tests to be conducted, a new instrument was developed that allows for the capture of work values in a format suitable for the calculation of fit with a geographically remote and distant set of respondents. The development and testing of this instrument is described in the five chapters in the second part of this thesis.

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It is usual at the start of Ph.D. theses for the author to acknowledge the help, support, and encouragement he or she has received over the duration of the study. Such is the mammoth undertaking of a Ph.D. that there are bound to be highs and lows, periods of frenetic activity and breaks, moments of excitement and moments when the wisdom of embarking on the study is severely questioned. During these fluctuating emotions, the author needs a network of friends, relations, advisors and colleagues to maintain the momentum and to reinforce the value of completion. In addition, there are some people who will have helped the study along by providing access to sites and financial assistance. I am no different to those that have trod this path before. I have been especially fortunate to receive help in all these ways and I would like to thank all of the following people, without whose help the study would not have been completed.

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NOTES

When text has been quoted from sources that use American spellings, they have been changed to British spellings so as not to disrupt the flow of the reader. The one exception to this rule is the list of references, which uses the original spelling.

Where gender-specific pronouns have been used, they refer to people whose gender is known. Otherwise, gender-neutral pronouns have been used.

The terms 'organisation', 'corporation', 'utility', 'company', and 'firm' have been used interchangeably in Part 3 to refer to the overarching company that granted access for the site of the main study. These terms have been used interchangeably for stylistic reasons rather than to denote different forms of ownership or reach. The term 'business unit' is reserved for the nine individual and separate business units that comprise the corporation. As will be shown in Part 1, the term 'person–organisation fit' refers to the interaction between people and work environments and does not infer fit to a multi-business unit level of analysis.

Two of the companies that granted access for the studies (i.e. the pilot study reported in Chapter 11 and the main study) have requested anonymity for reasons of commercial sensitivity. Hopefully their requests have been met whilst at the same time giving the reader sufficient background information to understand the context in which these companies are set.

In the main study, applicants are sometimes called 'graduates' although in most cases they are people expecting to graduate at the end of the academic year in which the study was conducted. The term 'undergraduates' was clearly inappropriate, as some of the applicants were graduates. The term 'graduates' was used as a reminder that, generally speaking, the applicants were people coming from a university setting with little work experience.

This thesis has been written in the third person. There is no reason for this decision, but a decision had to be made for the sake of consistency. The first part of the preface is written in the first person as it records how I came to the research question. It seemed inappropriate to write this section in the third person. I hope the change from first to third person does not jar too greatly.

SUMMARY OF RELATED PUBLICATIONS

During the period of study for this Ph.D. a series of writings have drawn directly or indirectly from this thesis. These are:

Billsberry, J., Moss-Jones, J. and Marsh, P.J.G. (2002) The brain makes the fit: On the materialist hypothesis to consciousness, neuropsychology and person–organisation fit. Paper presented at the *Academy of Management* Annual Meeting, Denver, CO.

Billsberry, J., Ambrosini, V., Moss-Jones, J. and Marsh, P.J.G. (2001) Some suggestions for the application of causal mapping and storytelling to survey individual complementary person–organisation fit. Paper presented at the *Academy of Management* Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

Billsberry, J. (2000) *Finding and Keeping the Right People.* 2nd (revised) edition. London: Prentice Hall.

Billsberry, (2000) Socialising newcomers to high energy call centres, *International Journal of Call Centre Management*, pp. 309-317, May-June.

Billsberry, J. (2000) Socialising teleworkers into the organisation. In Daniels, K.J., Lamond, D. and Standen, P. (eds.) *Managing Telework*, pp. 43-52. London: International Thomson Business.

Billsberry, J., Marsh, P.J.G. and Moss-Jones, J. (1999) Taking advantage of high levels of person-organisation value congruence in higher education settings. Paper presented at the *College and University Personnel Association* (CUPA) 1999 National Convention, Seattle, WH.

Billsberry, J. (1998) Gap analysis. In Scholes, K., Johnson, G. and Ambrosini, V. (eds.) *Techniques of Analysis and Evaluation in Strategic Management.* London: Prentice Hall.

Billsberry, J. (1998) Is fit fair? In Nodder, R., Paltiel, L., Dickson, R., Thomas, H., Patterson, F., Silvester, J., Mulrooney, C. and Travers, C. (eds.) *Book of Proceedings*, pp. 229-232. 31st Occupational Psychology Conference, Eastbourne.

Billsberry, J. (1997) The development and initial trial of a Likert-scaled questionnaire for the indirect assessment of person-organisation value congruence. Paper presented at the *Academy of Management* Annual Meeting, Boston, MA.

Billsberry, J. and Ambrosini, V. (1997) Is person-organisation fit a source of sustainable competitive advantage? In Kent, D.H. (ed.) *Book of Proceedings*, pp. 245-249. Eastern Academy of Management, Dublin. Paper and CD-ROM versions.

Billsberry, J. (1997) Surveying person-organisation fit in a transnational engineering company. In Silvester, J., Nodder, R., Paltiel, L., Dickinson, R., Mulrooney, C., Patterson, F. and Thomas, H. (eds.) *Book of*

Proceedings, pp. 47-52. 30th Occupational Psychology Conference, Blackpool.

Billsberry, J. and Marsh, P.J.G. (1997) Developing organisational capability: Bridging the gap between strategic intent and operational implementation. Paper presented at the *College and University Personnel Association* (CUPA) National Convention, Boston, MA.

Billsberry, J. (1996) *Finding and Keeping the Right People*. London: Pitman Professional Publishing.

Billsberry, J. (1996) When does recruitment and selection end? The 9A organisational entry cycle and a horticultural metaphor. In Billsberry, J. (ed.) *The Effective Manager: Perspectives and Illustrations*. London: Sage.

Billsberry, J. (1996; ed.) *The Effective Manager: Perspectives and Illustrations*. London: Sage.

Billsberry, J. (1995) The Fit Selection Model: A model of selection that incorporates person-organisation fit and person-job fit considerations. In Newell, S., Silvester, J., Paltiel, L., McHenry, R., Nodder, R., Dickson, R., Cowieson, N. and Travers, C. (eds.) *Book of Proceedings*, pp. 169-174. 28th Occupational Psychology Conference, University of Warwick, 1995.

Clark, T.A.R. and Billsberry, J. (1998) How headhunters select their prey. In Witkowski, T. (ed.) *Advances in Selection and Assessment* (*Nowoczesne Metody Doboru i Oceny Personelu*), pp. 79-98. Warsaw, Poland: Wydawnictwo Profesjonalnej Szkoły Biznesu.

SECTION 1

PREFACE

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Context

Before launching into the literature review, I think I should say a few words to help you position this thesis. My interest in recruitment and selection began some fifteen years ago when I worked as an executive search consultant. During that period I noticed that I assessed potential candidates' skills by analysing their results and by talking to knowledgeable people about the best performers in the profession or industry. Once I had identified these high performers I saw the role of my discussions with potential candidates as trying to assess whether or not they would be able to perform to the same or higher standards in a new organisational environment. Without knowing it at the time, I separated out the assessment of person–job and person–organisation fit and was using both as an indication of the quality of candidates.

When I turned to academia about twelve years ago, I began looking at the recruitment and selection literature for ways to make a contribution. Initially I found the dominant selection paradigm frustrating, as it did not equate with effective selection that I had previously seen in operation. The

main cause of this frustration was the unitary direction of the paradigm. Almost exclusively it is concerned with the assessment of applicants by organisations. When the views of applicants were incorporated, they were in response to the actions of organisations (i.e. applicants' reactions). This did not sit comfortably with my experience as a headhunter when I had spent three years reconciling the perceptions and interests of two parties (candidates and recruiters). When I found the person–organisation fit I was excited by the potential of this approach to incorporate and balance the interests of the two parties. A 'fit', so it seemed, had to be right to both parties for the recruitment and selection episode to be successful. This was an idea that rang true with my experience, and still seems the most effective and ethical way forward for recruitment and selection.

Whilst the idea of 'fit' was conceptually appealing, the practical implementation of it was limited. In the literature, 'fit' has been used in a derogatory way, almost as a surrogate word, to denote the biased or improper subjective assessment of candidates. This seems to happen because some interviewers report that they use unstructured interviews to assess the fit of applicants. The few cases of thorough assessment of applicants' fit, such as Bowen, Ledford and Nathan (1991), also contain a vagueness in the way that 'fitness' is assessed. But perhaps the most important factor of all in the general negative view of 'fit' in the selection literature is the theoretical work of Schneider (1987). He advanced a framework, termed the ASA framework after the phases of attraction, selection and attrition, that proposed that organisations become more and more homogeneous as they attract, select and retain people who share their values. He argues that this homogeneity is destructive to organisations. His use of emotive language such as 'organisational dry rot' and the simple intuitiveness of his framework have a strong appeal that has led to it becoming the dominant set of ideas in the literature. Almost all subsequent research in the recruitment and selection domain of person–organisation fit has cited this framework and these citations have, in turn, enhanced the dominance of Schneider's ideas. As the tenor of Schneider's paper is negative towards person–organisation fit, there is a pervasive negative feel to the person–organisation fit literature that seems to

act as a brake on its development. In particular, we know little about how to adopt a 'fit approach' in real recruitment and selection situations.

After several years of studying person–organisation fit I realised that very few people had tested Schneider's ASA framework. There are a couple of studies that have looked at the homogeneity of employees and shown that over time workforces do seem to share values. There are also some studies that have explored the attrition phase of the cycle and shown that newcomers are 'socialised' to recruiting organisations' values. However, I could not find any direct tests of the attraction and selection phases of the cycle. I decided that it was important to address this gap in the literature. It might be that Schneider was right and people are attracted to and selected by organisations when they fit. If so, there would be a need for us to find out how these forces influence our recruitment and selection procedures and, importantly, there would be a need for us to discover whether or not the consequences are as dire as Schneider suggests. Alternatively, Schneider might have overstated the case, or simply been wrong, in which case the centrality of these ideas in the person–organisation fit literature would need to be looked at and reassessed.

Sadly, it was not possible to study all of these issues. I confined myself to the necessary first steps: an investigation of whether or not people are attracted to and selected by organisations whose values they share. This thesis contains a report on how I investigated these two phases of the ASA framework and my findings.

Structure

This thesis is divided into three sections. The first section contains a review of the person–organisation fit literature with particular attention paid to Schneider's ASA theory. The second section of this thesis contains five chapters dealing with the development of an instrument to capture person–organisation fit with geographically remote respondents. The first of these chapters describes some of the methodological issues involved in capturing person–organisation fit. The following four chapters contain reports of studies that were conducted to test the effectiveness of the new instrument. The third section of this thesis contains a report of a study into whether or not people are

attracted to and selected by organisations whose values they share. This was conducted at one of Britain's largest utility groups in the late 1990s.

Literature review

This first section of the thesis contains seven chapters that review the person–organisation (P–O) fit literature. The first chapter provides an overview of the P–O fit literature tracing its theoretical roots in the person–environment psychology and person–environment fit literatures. The term 'person–organisation fit' is defined and the language of P–O fit is clarified. The last part of this first chapter considers the theoretical dilemma associated with high levels of P–O fit. This dilemma is that whilst high levels of P–O fit might be good for individual employees, Schneider's Attraction–Selection–Attrition (ASA) framework hypothesises that they might be negative for organisations by reducing diversity, increasing resistance to change, and embedding rigid structures to create a form of organisational 'dry rot' (Schneider, 1987, p. 446).

The second chapter explores Schneider's ASA framework in more depth and focuses on its theoretical background and the nature of its propositions. In summary, ASA theory suggests that organisations become more internally homogeneous as they attract, select and retain people who share their values. The following three chapters provide a review of the empirical data related to each of the three main hypotheses in the ASA framework.

Chapter 6 draws together the main themes in the review and highlights the gaps in the literature that this study will address, which are an empirical investigation of whether or not organisations attract and select people who share their values. The final chapter in this section provides an explanation of how these research questions will be investigated.

CHAPTER 1

PERSON–ORGANISATION FIT

Person–Environment Psychology

The stream of ideas that person–organisation fit belongs to can trace its theoretical roots back almost one hundred years to the emergence of person–environment psychology (PEP). This literature is built on the notion that environmental factors influence people's behaviour, attitudes, and moods. Kantor (1924), for example, was able to distinguish between the physical environment, which he termed the 'biological environment', and the psychological environment as different factors influencing individual behaviour. Kantor did not specify the precise nature of the relationship between the physical and psychological factors, merely stating that there was a reciprocal interplay at work.

Two researchers contributed to this debate by speculating on the nature of the relationship between the two sets of factors. Koffka (1935) also made a distinction between the physical and psychological environments and suggested that there was an interaction between the two. Lewin's (1935) much cited idea is that a person's behaviour is determined by a function of personal and environmental attributes. Lewin's contribution is particularly interesting because he realised that it is the individual's internal perception of the environment, rather than the actual physical characteristics of the external environment, that influences behaviour in interaction with internal factors. However, Lewin did not specify the nature of the relationship between the person and environment factors referring instead to a 'certain total constellation–comprising a situation and an individual' (Lewin, 1935, p. 73).

Lewin's work was taken forward by Murray (1938). Murray proposed that behaviour is a function of the interaction between an individual's personality needs and their perceptions of the environment, which he termed the 'press'. He split the environment into an objective perspective and a psychological perspective. Of the two, Murray argued that the perceptual psychological perspective was the more important of the two in terms of shaping behaviour. This needs–press theory combines with Lewin's ideas to provide the foundations of PEP (Walsh, Price & Craik, 1992). This generic PEP literature has been divided into several streams of research depending on how researchers have conceptualised the fit of person and environmental factors (Schneider, Kristof-Brown, Goldstein & Smith, 1997).

Person–Situation Debate

An influential debate that flared within the personality literature concerned the comparative importance of the person (internal) or the situation (external) in determining the behaviour of people. This person–situation controversy is worth briefly summarising as it represents a major piece of the underpinning theory of Schneider's Attraction–Selection–Attrition (ASA) theory, some hypothesises of which the present study examines.

Most personality researchers, regardless of specific theoretical orientation, agree that personality has three basic components (Krahé, 1992, p. 10):

1. Personality is the reflection of individual uniqueness.
2. Personality is enduring and stable.
3. Personality and its reflection in behaviour are determined by forces or dispositions assumed to reside within the individual.

These three foundations of a psychological definition of personality are linked by the concept of consistency (Krahé, 1992, p. 10):

1. In order to capture the uniqueness of an individual's personality, that is, those personal qualities that distinguish him or her from others, one has to seek for

consistent differences between individuals both across different situations and over time.

2. To demonstrate the stability and endurance of personality, evidence of intraindividual consistency is required, again both temporally and cross-situationally.
3. To explain a person's behaviour as the manifestation of some internal disposition, it is essential that the disposition can be shown to shape behaviour consistently and reliably in different situations.

Thus, personality is inextricably linked to the notion of consistency. As Loevinger and Knoll (1983, p. 196) say, "If there is no consistency in behaviour, then the field of personality should disappear". This issue of whether or not there is consistency in personality has fuelled the person–situation debate for over sixty years. On one side of the debate are those researchers who believe that behaviour is mainly determined by stable, enduring psychological qualities of the individual. On the other side of the debate, are those researchers who propose that behaviour is driven by the situation and that any observed personality consistency is due to stimuli consistency accorded to the situation. To resolve the debate, researchers focused on the following question: "Is the evidence for consistent relationships between personal characteristics and behaviour conclusive enough to explain individual behaviour in terms of personality traits and other dispositional constructs and, by implication, to assign predictive power to these intrapersonal variables?" (Krahé, 1992, p. 11).

There is a long history of researchers adopting a trait approach to understanding personality dating back to at least Ancient Greece with Hippocrates (about 400 BC) and Galen (about 150 BC). Although, strictly speaking, they advocated a theory of personality types, from which personality trait theory later developed (Carver and Scheier, 1992). Two of the most influential researchers of the twentieth century are Cattell (1950) and Eysenck (1952), who used factor analytical techniques to present trait models of personality. Underpinning the use of trait theories as theoretical constructs in personality research are three general features (Krahé, 1992, p. 20):

1. Traits are invoked as differential constructs to explain why people differ from each other in their responses to identical or similar situations.
2. A person's behaviour is assumed to show relative temporal and cross-situational consistency due to the operation of some latent internal disposition.
3. Research based on the trait concept typically employs personality tests in the form of trait rating and relies on correlational methods in the analysis of data.

Traits are viewed in one of two ways. First, they can be seen as summary labels for observed behaviours. Thus, they categorise observed behaviours, but do not offer an explanation and may not be used to predict future behaviour (Mischel, 1973). Secondly, traits can be viewed as dispositions. According to this view, traits are hypothetical constructs that are designed to explain and predict regularities in behaviour. They are latent tendencies that dispose a person to behave in a particular way if a situation is encountered that actualises the respective disposition (Allport, 1937). As such, traits are claimed to have a causal role in producing specific patterns of individual behaviour and, in addition, they produce individual differences in the way people respond to situations.

Those researchers holding the opposing situational view of personality share four assumptions (Krahé, 1992, p. 29):

1. Behaviour is highly situation-specific, not cross-situationally consistent.
2. Individual differences within a situation are attributed primarily to measurement error rather than broad internal dispositions.
3. Observed response patterns can be causally linked to the stimuli present in the situation.
4. The experiment is the most appropriate method for discovering such stimulus–response links.

The situational critique of the trait position was expressed most cogently in Mischel's 1968 book, *Personality and Assessment*. In this book, he

attacked the empirical foundations of the trait approach. Instead, he suggested that,

> *although it is evident that persons are the source from which human responses are evoked, it is situational stimuli that evoke them, and it is changes in conditions that alter them. Since the assumption of massive behavioural similarity across diverse situations no longer is tenable, it becomes essential to study the difference in the behaviours of a given person as a function of the conditions in which they occur (Mischel, 1968, p. 295).*

Mischel's argument that situations cause behaviour was founded on data from laboratory experiments. Bowers (1973) later rebutted Mischel's argument by showing that as these experiments were set up to demonstrate the effects of situations, they constrained the display of individual differences and therefore downplayed the impact of traits. Further, Bowers (1973) noted that in the laboratory experiments, participants are randomly allocated to treatments which violates a fundamental reality that individuals choose to enter and to exit particular situations. Finally, he argued that people determine environments as much as environments determine human behaviour.

Bowers' critique of Mischel laid the modern foundations of interactional psychology. By suggesting that people and situations are both essential ingredients in determining human behaviour, Bowers awoke interest in Lewin's proposition that behaviour is a function of person and the situation expressed as $B = f(P,S)$. Such was the power of Bowers' argument, and subsequent development by researchers such as Ekehammar (1974) and Magnusson and Endler (1977) in the mid-1970s, that most personality researchers would now generally accept the approach and see the person-situation debate as a "pseudo issue" (Endler, 1973). Instead, researchers prefer a theoretical model which accepts that both dispositions and situations are equally necessary and mutually dependent for understanding the determinants of human behaviour (Krahé, 1992).

Interactional Psychology

The theoretical manifestation of this agreement has become known as interactional psychology. Although it takes many forms, the following four characteristics are generic elements underpinning all approaches (Magnusson and Endler, 1977, p. 4):

1. *Actual behaviour is a function of a continuous process of multidirectional interaction or feedback between the individual and the situations he or she encounters.*
2. *The individual is an intentional, active agent in this interaction process.*
3. *On the person side of the interaction, cognitive and motivational factors are essential determinants of behaviour.*
4. *On the situation side, the psychological meaning of situations for the individual is the important determining factor.*

Thus, the interactional approach sees interactions between the individual and situational factors as the determinant of individual behaviour. Importantly, the approach accepts that people are active agents and the relevant internal factors to consider in the interaction equation relate to cognitive and motivational factors such as values, drives, needs, expectations and intelligence. These active agents do not simply interact with the situation, but they also choose whether or not to enter and exit situations depending upon how the individual interprets the situation.

The nature of this interaction was well demonstrated by Raush, Dittman and Taylor (1959). They looked at six preadolescent boys in six different settings such as during games and when eating. All of the boys had a history of aggressive behaviour. The researchers found that whilst differences in settings and children both generally affected behaviour, patterns of aggressive behaviour changed with maturity and became more limited to specific situations rather than being consistent over all situations. Importantly though, it was the interaction between specific settings and individual differences that influenced aggressive behaviour, and the interaction varied

with the child and the salience of the situation to the child being studied. Pervin (1978, p. 23-24) illustrates this type of interaction with an individual example:

> *Jennifer is almost always sensitive, vulnerable, and insightful. She is also friendly, warm, and accepting most of the time except when she is in some volatile home situations, at which times she is uniquely irritable, angry, upset, depressed, uncontrolled, and rebellious. She also tends to be involved and caring, except when she is in uncertain situations where she is detached, preoccupied, introverted, controlled, and cool.*

The point here is that another person might display quite contradictory qualities to Jennifer in these situations and that each person has quite distinctive and consistent ways in which they interact with situations. What is salient for one person, might not be for another. So, to understand people's behaviour, individual differences, situations, and most importantly, the interaction between these two variables need to be analysed. These internal and external factors are interdependent. Pervin (1976, p. 471) concludes,

> *In sum, the data suggest that all subjects are stable in some of their behaviour across all situations and variable in some of their behaviour in relation to different situations. Whether a person exhibits a specific behaviour in a situation will depend on whether that behaviour is part of one's repertoire, if so, whether it is stable or varies according to the situation and, if variable, its relationship to the particular situation. One's personality, then, can be defined as one's pattern of stability and change in relation to defined situational characteristics.*

The Interaction of Person and Environment Variables

Although it is possible to say that the person and environment variables are interdependent, there is a myriad of ways in which they might combine and interact. For example, it might be that one set of variables influences the other set, or it might be that the two sets of variables interact, or

it might be something even more complex. In the interactional psychology literature, there have been two main ways in which this interaction has been envisaged. The first of these two approaches is to view the environmental factors as moderators of the relationship between the person factors and some criterion. In other words, research is conducted to investigate the effect of some environmental factors upon an individual and his or her behaviour. Such a relationship between the person and environment factors is usually denoted by the algebraic notation PxE (Person x Environment; Schneider et al., 1997).

One example of this moderator approach is the work of Hackman and Oldham (1976, 1980). These researchers hypothesised that a job with a high motivating potential is most satisfying to someone when the person has the required knowledge and skills, a general level of satisfaction with their work, and a desire to grow and develop, which they termed 'growth need strength' (Hackman & Oldham, 1980, p. 85). In this case, the person variables (the required knowledge and skills, a general level of satisfaction with their work, and a desire to grow and develop) moderate the relationship between the behavioural criterion (job satisfaction) and the environment factors (the motivating potential of the job).

An alternative resolution of the uncertainty surrounding the relationship between person and environment factors is to examine the effects of the 'fit' between the two sets of factors. In this conceptualisation of the relationship, often referred to as P–E (Person–Environment) fit, it is the degree or profile of fit that is of interest as a predictor. The person and environment factors are only of interest as a means of calculating the person's level of fit. An example of this type of research is the vocational adjustment work of Holland (1959, 1966, 1973, 1985). Holland proposed that people pursue vocations that are congruent with their interests. They do this because people are satisfied with and adjust most easily to such congruent vocational interests. In the studies that have investigated this theory, some form of index of fit between the individual and their vocation is used as the predictor or independent variable, and a behaviour (e.g. satisfaction, adjustment) is the dependent variable (Guthrie & Herman, 1982; Rose & Elton, 1982; Schwartz, Andiappan & Nelson, 1986; Spokane, 1985; Wiggins & Moody, 1983).

Person–Organisation Fit

The construct of person–organisation fit is part of the hierarchy that PEP sits atop. Just as person–environment fit is a part of the more generic world of PEP, person–organisation fit is a part of the more generic domain of person–environmnent fit. It differs from the more generic person–environment fit in two main ways. First, the person factors are those related to work. Second, the environment factors are those concerned with organisational level influences on the individual. There are other aspects of the work environment that might influence the employee, such as interactions with other employees (person–people fit; P–P fit), membership of teams (person–group fit; P–G fit), and fit to the job (person–job fit; P–J fit). However, these are usually assigned as other subdivisions of person–environment fit (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Jansen & Colbert, 2001; Schneider, et al., 1997) allowing person–organisation (P–O) fit to focus on the individual's fit with organisational level factors.

The subject of P–O fit gained momentum in the late 1980s with the theoretical contributions of Schneider (1987) and Chatman (1989). Schneider's ideas, to which the next chapter is devoted, posited that organisations attract, select and retain people who share the values of the organisation. In contrast, those people who do not 'fit' are not attracted to apply to the organisation, are not selected by it, and leave if employed by it. He argued that this cycle, termed the ASA cycle, progresses over time to produce a dysfunctional ingrown organisation (Schneider, 1987).

Chatman's (1989) theoretical contribution is based on an extrapolation of interactional psychology into the domain of organisational behaviour. Her model of P–O fit suggests that the congruence between the norms and values of organisations and the values of persons determines behaviour in work environments. In particular, her model focused attention on the work episodes of selection and socialisation and discussed many issues concerning the outcomes of P–O fit.

Following these two theoretical contributions, some twenty or so empirical papers investigating the propositions of Schneider and Chatman were published in the period 1988–1996. Overall, these papers produced

findings that suggest that an index of individual's fit to work environments is associated with job search activity (Rynes, Bretz & Gerhart, 1991), job choice intentions (Bretz, Ash & Dreher, 1989; Cable & Judge, 1994, 1996; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Turban & Keon, 1993), selection (Adkins, Russell & Werbel, 1994; Cable & Judge, 1995, 1996; Chatman, 1991, Rynes & Gerhart, 1990), prosocial behaviours (Posner, 1992), socialisation (Chatman, 1991), tenure (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991; Vancouver, Millsap & Peters, 1994; Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991), and work attitudes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Boxx, Odom & Dunn, 1991; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al. 1991; Posner, 1992, Vancouver et al. 1994; Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991). In addition, there was evidence produced to suggest that some organisations actively go out to recruit people who will 'fit' the organisation (Bowen et al, 1991; Judge & Ferris, 1992; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990).

Whilst this research can be broadly grouped beneath the P–O fit banner, these studies exhibit little consensus in their definitions of P–O fit. For some, P–O fit is concerned with value congruence (e.g. Cable & Judge, 1995; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al., 1991), whilst for others it is about goal congruence (e.g. Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991) or individual's preference for particular organisational systems such as pay structures (e.g. Turban & Keon, 1993). Kristof (1996) recognised this divergence and set about creating a definition of P–O fit that would open an umbrella beneath which all P–O fit studies could be collected. She noted that as 'confusion exists regarding what falls under the rubric of P–O fit, research on the topic is ... open to misinterpretation and equivocal operationalizations' (p. 2). She developed an integrative definition drawing upon the conceptual work of Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) in which they considered the different types of fit in operation in the P–E fit literature. Muchinsky and Monahan were able to differentiate between two conceptually distinct types of fit: supplementary and complementary. Supplementary fit refers to similarity or congruence between features of the individual and the organisation. When the values, for example, of the individual match, mirror, mimic, or reflect the values of the organisation there is said to be a fit. A complementary fit is said to exist when the characteristics of either the person or the environment 'make whole'

(Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987, p. 271) the corresponding party or add to it what is missing. Such a relationship can be conceptualised in many ways. Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) describe active–passive, strong–weak, and leader–follower examples of complementary fits. Edwards (1991, 1996) adds supplies–values (one party supplying what the other values) and demands–abilities (one party demands that the other possesses certain abilities) pairings.

Kristof took Muchinsky and Monahan's generic conceptualisation of fit categories and adapted them for the organisational environment. She noted that the environment factor in organisational settings can itself place demands and value particular knowledge, skills, and other abilities in its employees. This allowed her to subdivide P–O complementary fit into person and organisation perspectives depending on which party was making demands or valuing aspects of the other. Kristof's revised categories subdivide P–O fit into three distinct conceptualisations, all of which belong to the P–E, rather than the PxE, strand of PEP. Kristof's integrative definition of P–O fit has become the accepted standard: 'P–O fit is defined as *the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both*' (Kristof, 1996, pp. 4-5). Whilst this definition is a 'catch-all' and therefore does not guide research, it has done much to clarify the field by supplying a unifying language to explain P–O fit matters. This definition is depicted in Figure 1.1.

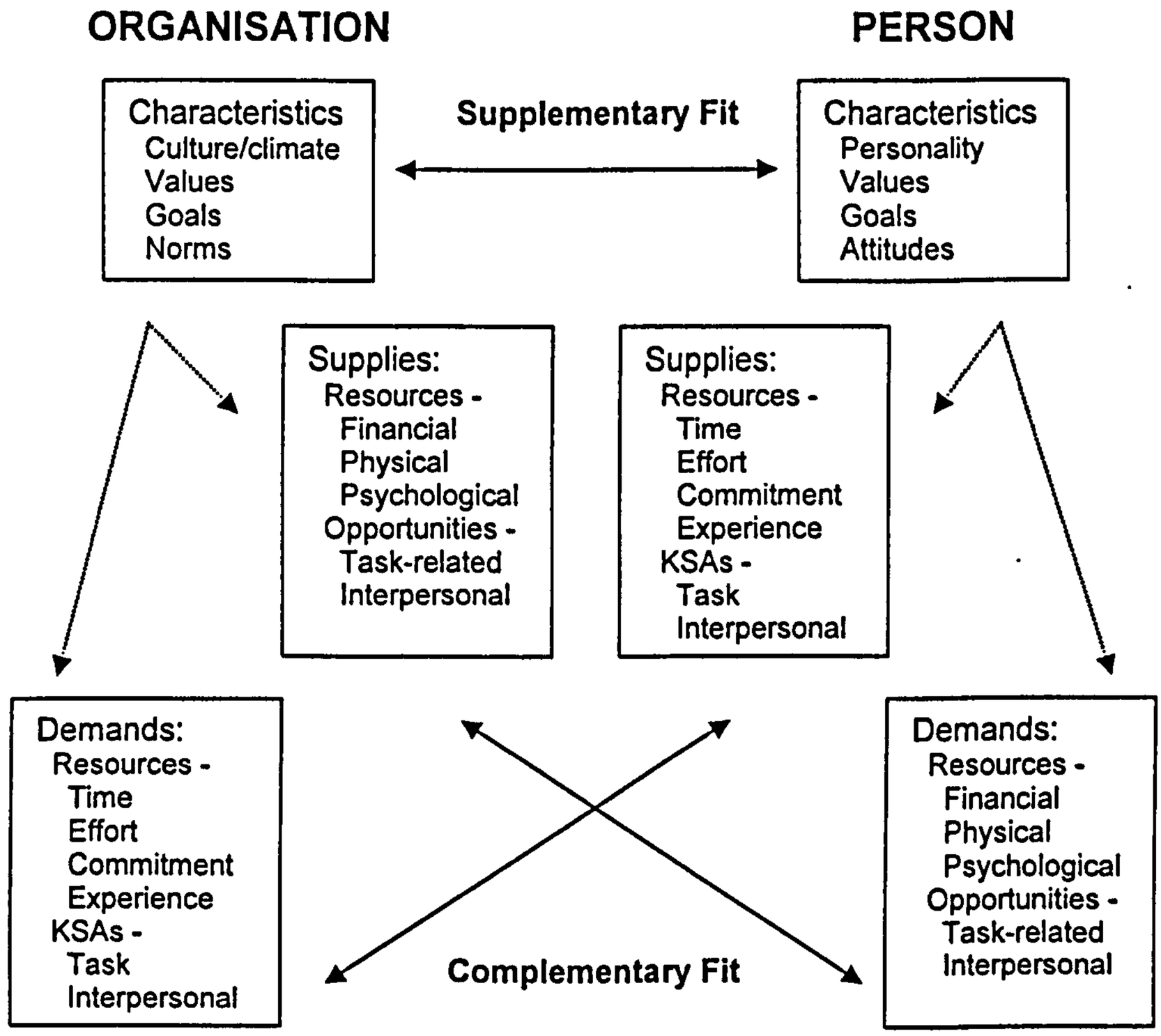

Figure 1.1 Kristof's Conceptualisations of Person–Organisation Fit

Although it looks confusing, Kristof's (1996) pictorial representation of her definition of P–O fit does bring some clarity to the literature. The three boxes down the left-hand side of the diagram contain qualities of the organisation that have been investigated in studies. The corresponding three boxes down the right-hand side contain qualities of the person that have been investigated. The three solid arrows represent the three different forms of fit. The arrow connecting the two boxes at the top of the diagram signifies the supplementary fit studies that have considered the similarity or congruence between person and organisation factors. The two solid arrows at the bottom of the diagram represent the two forms of complementary fit connecting the relevant features of the person and the organisation.

Contemporary Studies of Person–Organisation Fit

Since Kristof's integrative review of the literature, there have been a further twenty or so empirical studies of P–O fit published. These fall into two

main streams. One stream has studied the homogeneity of organisational workforces (e.g. Schaubroeck, Ganster & Jones, 1998; Schneider, Smith, Taylor & Fleenor, 1998). In summary, these studies have found evidence suggesting that organisations exhibit some internal homogeneity in the personalities of their workforces. The studies that fall into this category are discussed in depth in the next chapter. The second stream of research has concentrated on applicants' and interviewers' fit perceptions (e.g. Cable & Judge, 1996, 1997; Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Van Vianen, 2000). In essence, these papers demonstrate that both applicants and organisational selectors make job-choice judgements based on their fit perceptions. These studies are discussed fully in the third and fourth chapters.

The reason for drawing attention to these two streams of research is that they represent two sides of a theoretical paradox that forms the pervading context of P–O fit. This paradox is putting the brakes on the field. In particular, there have been very few practical outcomes from a largely academic debate. In the meantime, organisational recruiters continue to recruit for fit but do so in a most haphazard manner (Bowen et al, 1991; Judge & Ferris, 1992). The theoretical paradox is that whilst there have been many empirical studies demonstrating the positive psychological impact of high levels of P–O fit for the individual worker (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991), there are theoretical concerns that high levels of P–O fit may be disadvantageous to organisations (Schneider, 1987; Schneider et al, 1997, 1998). These theoretical objections stem from the work of Ben Schneider. He posited that there exists an organisational cycle of attraction–selection–attrition (ASA) in which organisations attract, select and retain those people who share the organisation's goals. He argues that over time this cycle creates an organisation that is increasingly homogeneous in the personalities of its employees. This homogeneity, he argues, can make an organisation 'so ingrown in type that it begins to occupy an increasingly narrow ecological niche. When this happens, the organization can fail–its people, structures and processes may become so appropriate for a particular segment of the environment that, when the environment changes, the kinds of

people, processes, and structures are no longer viable. Organizations may then experience what Argyris (1976) calls 'dry rot' (Schneider, 1987, p 445-6).

At present, this is a theoretical paradox as there is relatively little empirical evidence to support or rebut Schneider's proposals. Such that there is, is reviewed in detail in the following four chapters. In summary, there does seem to be a homogeneity effect and there is evidence supporting the attrition proposition. As yet though, the attraction and selection propositions have received little attention. The purpose of the present study is to fill this gap in the literature. It investigates the first two of Schneider's propositions; namely, that organisations attract and select people who fit.

CHAPTER 2

THE ASA FRAMEWORK

American organisational psychologist Ben Schneider delivered the 1985 Presidential Address to the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, American Psychological Association Convention in Los Angeles. His speech, entitled 'The People Make the Place', advocated a framework for understanding the aetiology of organisational behaviour. The central thesis of his framework was that organisations are functions of the kinds of people they contain. He argued that the people who are attracted to an organisation, those selected by it, and those that chose to remain share the values of the organisation to create a homogeneous workforce. He drew attention to the disproportionate concentration of researchers on a situational view of behaviour. In this situational paradigm, researchers view behaviour, both organisational and individual, as being driven from environmental factors, such as the organisation's structure or culture, the nature of a job, or the influence of a leader. According to such a stance, employees do little to determine their own behaviour. Instead, it is argued, behaviour is determined by environmental factors. Schneider wrote up his speech and it appeared in *Personnel Psychology* two years later. The last two paragraphs of this article colourfully summarise his position.

> *In short, we have been seduced into thinking that organisational processes and structures are the causes of the attitudes, feelings, experiences, meanings, and behaviours that we observe there. We attribute cause not to the people attracted to, selected by, and remaining with organisations, but to the signs of their existence in the organisation: to structure, process, and technology.*

Enough is enough. We are psychologists and behavioural scientists; let us seek explanation in people not in the results of their behaviour. The people make the place (Schneider, 1987, p. 451).

First Draft

Schneider's theory is built upon his analysis of the person–situation debate of the late 1960s and early 1970s between Mischel and Bowers (see Chapter 1). He concurred with Bowers' critique of the situationalist position and its reliance on experimental studies conducted in laboratory settings. These, he agreed, over-emphasise the situational causes of behaviour by constraining the display of individual differences, ignoring the 'real-time human behaviour' (p. 439) that people are not randomly selected to situations (they usually have a great deal of influence in which situations they choose to enter), and ignoring the human creation of environments. Rarely are people just presented with an environment to which they respond. Instead, people usually have some influence on the nature of the environments in which they inhabit.

This part of Schneider's (1987) review of the interactional psychology literature yields three propositions for understanding the organisational environment (Schneider, 1987, p. 440):

Experimental laboratories mask the display of individual differences. This method, then, is inappropriate for studying the relative contributions of traits and situations to understanding behaviour.

People are not randomly assigned to real organisations; people select themselves into and out of real organisations.

People and human settings are inseparable; people are *the setting because it is they who make the setting.*

Schneider's analysis and these three propositions lead directly to his idea that 'it is the people who are attracted to, are selected by, and remain in a setting that determine the setting' (Schneider, 1987, p. 440). This, he

argues, yields the idea that people and environments are not separable and that people make the environment what it is. Organisational environments look different because different organisations attract, select and retain different types of people. Over time, this cycle of attraction–selection–attrition creates homogeneity amongst the inhabitants of the environment that explains why organisations look and feel different to one another. These ideas lead to Schneider's fourth proposition (p. 441):

> *Attraction to an organisation, selection by it, and attrition from it yield particular kinds of persons in an organisation. These people determine organisational behaviour.*

Schneider's theoretical base for his attraction and attrition propositions comes from vocational psychology and, in particular, the vocational adjustment work of Holland (see Chapter 1). The dominant finding of this avenue of research work is that people are differently attracted to careers as a function of their own interests and personality. Holland (1985) noted that both careers and career environments can be grouped and that people who join an environment are similar to the people already in it. Schneider makes just a short inferential leap to move from career choice to job choice.

Schneider very briefly summarises the turnover literature and distils it down to one relevant conclusion: 'people who do not fit an environment well will tend to leave it' (Schneider, 1987, p. 442). They do this, he argues, because they realise they have made a job choice mistake that they need to rectify. As a result of these entry and exit decisions that people make, the people inhabiting organisations become similar to each other. This produces a smaller range of personal attributes than would occur by chance. As a result, when researchers examine the behaviour of work settings, there is a tendency to attribute the cause of behaviour to situational influences on people creating similar effects, rather than to the similarity of people in the environment. Schneider advances a fifth proposition in line with this reasoning (Schneider, 1987, p. 443):

> *Attraction to an organisation and attrition from it produces a restricted range in the kinds of people in an organisation. This restricted range of people yields similar kinds of behaviour*

from the people there, making it appear as if the organisation were a determinant of their behaviour.

Schneider speculates that it is goals, especially those of the founder of an organisation, that attract people to an organisation and with which people interact when employed by the organisation. Schneider suggests that when they do not fit with these goals, they leave. Unfortunately, Schneider does not define what he means by the term 'goals' except to say that they are not chosen actively or consciously dictated. Instead, 'they emerge initially from the kind of person or persons who establish (found) the organisation' (Schneider, 1987, p. 443). As organisations mature, the increasingly homogeneous nature of employees, who were attracted by the founder's goals, determines the processes and structures in the organisation. Schneider encapsulates this line of thought in his sixth proposition (Schneider, 1987, p. 443-4)

The goals, structures and processes that attract people to organisations are determined by the founders' choices, that is, by his or her choices to found a particular kind of organisation. The processes and structures that emerge in an organisation evolve from people meeting the daily demands associated with survival.

Finally, Schneider turns his attention to selection. He cites the work of Aldrich (1979) who argues that organisations need people with particular types of competence depending on the environment in which they exist and the technologies they employ. As organisations formally and informally select people based on the profile of competencies they have, and as different people have different types of competence (Campbell & Hansen, 1985), this further restricts the range of people in the organisation. Schneider acknowledges that there is a difficulty with this approach. Namely, that organisations require many different competencies in order to operate. This might create diversity in the people selected that undermines the idea of personal attribute range restriction. Schneider theoretically resolves this difficulty by conceptualising people as multidimensional. Hence, organisations can be characterised by people sharing many personal attributes and differing only in respect to

particular competencies: 'organisations further restrict the range of types of people in them through the recruitment and hiring of people with the kinds of competencies need for effectiveness' when he hypothesises 'that through recruitment and selection procedures organisations actually end up choosing people who share many common personal attributes although they may not share common competencies' (Schneider, 1987, p. 444). Schneider's seventh proposition is a summary of his new theory of organisational behaviour (Schneider, 1987, p. 444):

> *As an outcome of the attraction, selection, and attrition cycle, organisations will have severely restricted the range of types of people in them.*

Revisions to the Model

Schneider's 1987 paper was originally constructed as a controversial keynote speech for a conference. It was later converted into a theoretical paper outlining the ASA framework. It was built on a decade of targeted study (Schneider, 1975, 1983a, 1983b, 1983c, 1985), but, nevertheless, was vague about many of its propositions. Schneider and his colleagues, Harold Goldstein and Brent Smith, clarified some of the propositions of the ASA framework in a subsequent paper (Schneider, Goldstein & Smith, 1995). They highlighted two issues as being particularly 'vague' (Schneider, et al, 1995, p. 748) and in need of clarification. The two issues were the currency of similarity and matters to do with the capture and indexing of fit. Unfortunately the authors do not offer further clarification on the second of these issues (the methodology of researching fit from an ASA perspective is discussed in later chapters), but they do add some explanation of the currency of similarity.

Schneider (1987) switches between constructs when referring to the nature of relevant personal or organisational attributes or characteristics to which people are attracted, selected and retained. In the original paper, Schneider argued that the 'restriction in range yields people who not only are similar in kind but who will be similar in behaviour, orientations, feelings, and reactions' (Schneider, 1987, p. 442-3). Later on, he makes goals an important additional aspect of similarity. He justifies his vagueness thus: 'I have

emphasised constructs variously labelled "personality", "interests", "type", "kind", "inclination", "profile of attributes" and so on. These terms are used here to connote a macro, organisational-level issue; they do not refer to individual differences within organisations' (Schneider, 1987, p. 447).

These sentences are far from clear and need some interpretation. The simplest interpretation of these statements is that he is directing attention to the macro, organisational-level outcome of homogeneity that he views as inappropriate to describe using the language of individual differences. To do so would be both reification and anthropomorphism. Assuming that this is what Schneider meant, two issues arise. The first issue concerns his natural inclination towards the language of individual differences that seems so hard to resist. It seems that Schneider's problem stems from his focus on a macro organisational-level outcome (i.e. homogeneity of 'type' within the organisation) that is the result of a micro individual-level process (i.e. the ASA cycle). The ASA cycle is clearly one that works at a micro individual-level; generally speaking, persons decide whether or not to apply for a job with an organisation, they decide whether to stay, and organisational members decide whom to select (of course, there are two sides to each of these interactions as will be discussed later in this chapter). These individual-level interactions involve personality, values, goals, attitudes, and so forth. Extrapolating up to the organisational-level creates a problem for Schneider because he is continually flirting with reification and anthropomorphism. For example, he cannot say that the organisation has a homogeneous personality, instead he must say that there is homogeneity amongst the personalities within the organisation. He had no language at hand to describe organisational-level effects of individual-processes without breathing some 'life' into the inanimate organisation. At the time of his writing very little was known about which aspects of individual differences were related to individual's assessments of fit, hence the vagueness in his demarcation of the currency of fit.

The second issue that emerges concerns the precise definition of the word 'make' that Schneider uses in the title of his article. If the people do make the 'place', is the 'place' envisaged as something different and separate to the people who made it? To clarify, the question is whether the use of the

term 'making the place' implies that individuals *are* the place or whether individuals *create* something separate from themselves such as a culture that cannot be described in terms of the properties of the individuals comprising them. For example, Durkheim (1938) posited an extreme version of this thesis when he suggested that people 'forming groups ... give birth to a being ... constituting a psychic individuality of a new sort' (p. 103). Several passages in Schneider's article suggest that he does not adhere to the position illustrated by Durkheim. For example, 'organisations are said to have certain cultures when the people there share a common set of assumptions, values, and beliefs' (p. 448). Citing Schein (1985), Schneider also puts great emphasis on the role of the founder and his or her goals in creating and shaping the nature of the organisations. People are attracted to and remain with the organisation if they support these goals. The structures, and processes that evolve in organisations are perpetuated, so Schneider argues, because they share these goals; 'it is the behaviour of all the people in them that defines organisational direction' (Schneider, 1987, p. 443). To some extent, therefore, the theory seems to propose that the people *are* the place.

In the 1995 paper, Schneider and his colleagues add some clarity to this definitional problem. They simplify matters considerably when they state 'although not specified by B. Schneider, the clear implication in his 1987 paper is that the attributes of interest are personality, attitudes, and values' (Schneider, et al, 1995, p. 749). They then use the term 'personality' to subsume these dispositional characteristics of people. Thus, they appear to envisage the organisational-level similarity as merely some form of addition or aggregation of outcomes from many individual-level processes. The idea that there might be something different or multidimensional about the nature of organisational-level similarity from individual-level similarity is lost. In essence, therefore, the revised theory suggests that when a particular construct is examined, for example values, individuals will be attracted to, and remain with, organisations that share their values. It is less clear how the selection phase of the cycle works in such circumstances, as will be discussed later. If the focus of attention is personality or attitudes, then a similar process operates, but with personality or attitudes substituted for values.

The researchers include just the three dispositions—personality, attitudes, and values—in their clarification. They note that these are three broad dispositions that can be further subdivided or conceptualised. Indeed, they note that different researchers have conceptualised these dispositions differently according to their own interests. Consequently, they appear to conceptualise the ASA framework as one that can operate on a broad range of dispositions and that organisational-level homogeneity effects are atomistic to the dispositions under consideration. So, an organisation might exhibit a strong homogeneity effect for values, but a weaker one for personality. Another organisation might demonstrate a reversal of this effect.

Whatever the answer to this debate, Schneider's original vagueness illustrates one of the intricacies of the ASA framework. For whilst he focuses on the organisational level outcome of similarity (the homogeneity hypothesis), there is an underlying process causing the result (the ASA cycle), which operates at an individual level.

Decision–Makers

Schneider views the three processes of attraction, selection and attrition as a cycle that operates over time to create the proposed homogeneity. It is portrayed as a self-perpetuating cycle in which those people sharing the personality, attitudes, and values of people in the organisation are attracted to, selected by, and stay with the organisation and later become the guardians of entry themselves as selectors of new staff. Clearly, whilst there are multiple players in each of these three processes and contamination between the processes (e.g. selection experiences colour the subsequent employee–employer relationship (Herriot, 1989b), and some selection occurs during the attraction phase), each of the three processes is fundamentally different in nature to the others. The three processes will be discussed in detail in the following three chapters. But before commencing those detailed specific discussions, it is necessary to consider these differences so that the individual processes may be put into context.

The process of selection stands apart from attraction and attrition in a fundamental way. Whilst attraction and attrition are primarily decisions made

by employees about their own fate, selection is primarily a decision made by organisational representatives about the fate of applicants. Although selection decisions are made by applicants ("Shall I turn up to a second interview?", "Shall I accept the offer from the company?" etc; Herriot, 1989b), generally speaking, it is the organisation that makes the majority of these decisions. Schneider himself defines selection in terms of the selection decisions made by organisational representatives; 'Over time, persons attracted to, *selected by* [emphasis added], staying with, and behaving in organisations cause them to be what they are' (Schneider, 1987, p. 445). Hence, Schneider views selection as the outcome of a one-way decision-making process conducted by the organisation's representatives. Clearly, this is in contrast to the decisions made by the individual employees about which organisations to apply to and stay with. According to Schneider's framework, selection decisions are made by people about other people, rather than by people of themselves: '[the second process] refers to the formal and informal *selection* procedures used by organisations in the recruitment and hiring of people with the attributes the organisation desires' (Schneider et al, 1995, p. 749).

Whilst the decision-maker is different in the selection process, the nature of the decision-making process is similar in one important respect. As Schneider's framework is built upon interactional psychology, it implicitly asserts that any decision made by any person is the outcome of an interaction of internal and external factors. So, an attraction decision made by a potential candidate stems from an interaction of the person's own values, goals, biases, norms, beliefs etc. with relevant external factors, such as the nature of the advertisement, prior experience with the organisation, the difficulty of engaging with the application process and so forth: 'people find organisations differentially attractive as a function of their implicit judgements of the congruence between those organisations' goals (and structures, processes, and culture as manifestations of those goals) and their own personalities' (Schneider et al, 1995, p. 749). A selection decision is produced from an interaction between a selector's internal assessment of what is required against his or her assessment of the nature of the individual. Someone's decision to remain with the organisation stems from an interaction of the individual's values, goals etc with the individual's experience of the organisational

environment. Hence, these decisions are double-sided and attempts to research these processes should, according to Schneider's framework, capture both internal and external factors and measure each set of factors and the interaction between them.

Complementary or Supplementary P–O Fit?

It is possible to conceptualise the ASA framework in both complementary and supplementary ways*. For example, according to a complementary conceptualisation, homogeneity might arise from people possessing similar wants, desires, and needs to each other. In other words, people would require the organisation to supply similar things that they all value. From a supplementary standpoint, the homogeneity would arise from people possessing similar values, goals and personalities, as supplementary fit is concerned with similarity between people. Clearly, these two types of fit are not mutually exclusive as people may have similar wants, needs, and desires and have similar personalities. Indeed, intuitively this seems more likely than not.

Whilst Schneider is not explicit about the nature of the fit involved in the ASA framework, there are many hints that a supplementary conceptualisation is intended (i.e. one concerned with *similarity* between people). He talks about 'organisations actually end up choosing people who share many common personal attributes' (Schneider, 1987, p. 444), 'congruence between those organisations' goals and their own personalities' (Schneider et al, 1995, p. 749), 'the modal personality of the people' (Schneider et al, 1998, p. 463), and 'promoting people to executive positions who match those already in place' (Schneider et al, 1998, p. 463). The use of the words, 'match', 'share', 'modal', and 'congruence' all point towards a supplementary definition of P–O fit without explicitly defining it as such. Moreover, his subsequent research (Schneider et al, 1998), which is reviewed later, examines the homogeneity hypothesis from a supplementary perspective. At this point in the thesis it is suffice to say that Schneider's notion of fit has a

* These terms were defined on Pages 26 and 27.

supplementary nature. Whether or not it is legitimate to conceptualise the supplementary fit in preference rather than actual terms will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Homogeneity Hypothesis

In the following three chapters, the published investigations of the three different processes of the ASA framework are reviewed. In the areas of attraction and selection these have mainly been indirect tests whereas the attrition process has been more directly tested. As will be shown, most of these direct and indirect tests of the processes offer some support for the propositions of the framework. In contrast, there have been very few published studies testing the homogeneity hypothesis; the notion that over time the personalities of an organisation's employees become increasingly similar. Those that there are, are reviewed below.

Jackson, Brett, Sessa, Cooper, Julin and Peyronnin (1991) studied 939 executives in 93 top management teams in large, established American banks and financial holding companies. They found some evidence to suggest that the executives in these top management teams were clustered together into teams that were relatively homogeneous in their demographic composition (i.e. in relation to their age, tenure, level of education, college curriculum, experience outside the industry, and military experience). However, the imprecision of the independent variables make the result difficult to interpret. The researchers also found (1) that top team turnover is greater with greater levels of heterogeneity in the top team, (2) that new recruits to the top team from inside the organisation are more homogeneous with existing top team members than recruits from outside the organisation, and (3) the more a member of the top team differs to other members, the greater the likelihood that they will leave the top team. This study provides some support for Schneider's homogeneity hypothesis. This support is weak, however, because the researchers examined homogeneity via demographic variables (age, educational background, military experience etc.), rather than by investigating psychological variables such as values, attitudes, or personality.

Jordan, Herriot and Chalmers (1991) investigated three different hypotheses derived from Schneider's theory: (1) that members of different organisations differ in personality; (2) members of different occupations within organisations differ in aptitude but not personality; and, (3) that there is an interaction between seniority and organisation such that the more senior managers are closer to the organisational personality profile than less senior people. Their sample was 344 managers in four British organisations. The organisations were a manufacturing company, a professional services company, a computer company, and a service company that had just experienced radical change. The researchers' personality measure was the 16PF (Cattell, 1949). Aptitude was measured using the Employee Aptitude Survey (Ruch & Ruch, 1963). The researchers found support for the attraction and selection elements of the ASA theory, but not for the attrition stage as senior managers appeared no different to others within each of the organisations. Interestingly, Jordan et al. (1991) found evidence for differences between functions within organisations suggesting that subcultures within organisations reproduce themselves in their own image.

Schneider himself has published a major test of the homogeneity hypothesis with colleagues Smith, Taylor and Fleenor (Schneider et al., 1998). Taking data from the archives of the Center for Creative Leadership, these researchers were able to examine a sample of 12,739 predominantly middle-aged, white, male managers from 142 organisations. Each member of the sample had completed the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI; Myers & McCaulley, 1985) whilst on a leadership development course at the Center. This sample spanned a broad spectrum of US businesses. By using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), which can detect subtle inclinations towards groupings, the researchers were able to support the hypothesis that organisations are relatively homogeneous with respect to the personality attributes of their managers. They also found that both industry and organisation had a significant effect on the personality characteristics of managers.

Finally, Denton (1999) examined the hypothesis that there would be a significant relationship between the homogeneity of personality and organisational tenure. He examined the personality types of 87 female store

managers working for the same book retailer, but in different outlets. The participants completed the MBTI personality indicator whilst attending a training course. At the individual level, the researcher was unable to find any statistically significant relationships between the two sets of data. One explanation of this finding could be that the managers of the retail outlets are rarely in contact and operate independently of each other, co-ordinated by the remote head office. As such, there would not appear to be any major factors influencing the personalities of the 87 dislocated managers. There are many other reasons why no significant findings were found, including, of course, the falsehood of the original premise, but it seems to suggest that some form of actual personal interaction is a prerequisite for the homogeneity hypothesis.

In summary, these studies provide mixed results regarding the homogeneity hypothesis. The studies that have looked at organisational environments in which the respondents have geographical proximity have found the effect, whereas the one study in which the organisational members were geographically dispersed did not. Given the small number of studies that have examined the homogeneity hypothesis, the evidence is not compelling. But the finding that geographic remoteness of organisational members is relevant (albeit a very weak finding) does suggest that the attraction phase of the ASA cycle might be less influential than hypothesised when applicants are external to the organisation.

Conclusion

Schneider's work is important for several reasons. First, by extrapolating from theory in the interactional personality literature to the organisational behaviour domain, he establishes the interactional agenda for analysing organisational environments. In doing so, he sets the decisions to enter or exit from an organisation as the prime features of individual behaviour in organisations when viewed from the perspective of the organisation. Secondly, by arguing that people create organisational environments, he suggests a reciprocal process between the two, which makes the recruitment and selection of staff key factors in the success of the organisation. Thirdly, his homogeneity hypothesis suggests a narrowing of the range of personalities,

values and attitudes in the organisation. Schneider argues that this can lead to organisational dysfunctionality.

This chapter has reviewed Schneider's ASA theory and the studies that have been conducted into the homogeneity hypothesis. From this review, several conclusions can be draw concerning the study of this theory:

1. Although Schneider is imprecise in the way he defines ASA theory, the strong implication in his writing and subsequent work is that he intends a supplementary, or congruence, approach.
2. Schneider envisages organisational-level outcomes – i.e. the homogeneity hypothesis – emerging from individual-level processes.
3. The currency of fit for investigation can be personality, attitudes or values.
4. It is inappropriate to use laboratory settings to test ASA theory, as these will mask the display of individual differences.

CHAPTER 3

ATTRACTION

When Schneider (1987) describes the attraction phase of the ASA framework, he emphasises the importance of similarity. He argues that when people believe that organisations are similar to themselves, people are attracted to them: e.g. 'similar kinds of people are likely to have similar kinds of personalities, are likely to choose to do similar kinds of things, and are likely to behave in similar kinds of ways' (Schneider, 1987, p. 441). The evidence to support the conclusion that similarity is the key determinant in shaping these actions comes mainly from the vocational psychology and job choice literatures; in particular, the work of Holland (1976) and Tom (1971). Holland's work was discussed in the first chapter. In brief summary, his work showed that people choose to join career environments that they are similar to. Tom (1971) contributed to this literature by demonstrating that people's most preferred work environment has the same 'personality' as they do. Hence, Schneider's conceptualisation is, in essence, the idea that similarity leads to attraction. Conversely, he argues that dissimilarity leads to attrition. This aspect of the ASA framework will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

The idea that similarity is key in attraction is supported by research findings in the interpersonal attraction, love, and relationships literatures (Gross, 1992). For example, Hatfield, Traupmann and Walster (1978) reviewed the literature and showed that couples tend to be similar in terms of IQ, education and other characteristics. Newcomb (1961) gathered data from a women's university college in the USA that had a strong tradition of liberal values. The researcher found that in order to gain the liking and acceptance of classmates, many students coming from conservative backgrounds adopted liberal attitudes.

The 'bogus stranger' research method has been employed on attraction research. This method entails a person being asked for his or her own characteristics (e.g. values or attitudes). At a later point in time, the person is presented with a profile of a stranger. Then, the person is asked to say how much he or she likes the stranger. As the name of the method implies, the 'bogus stranger' is a creation of the researcher that can be manipulated to incorporate as many, or as few, characteristics (values, attitudes etc.) of the person as required. In reviewing 'bogus stranger' studies of attraction, Byrne and Nelson (1965) conclude that as the proportion of similar attitudes increases, attraction towards the stranger increases in a linear fashion.

Whilst there are many studies supporting the notion that similarity, particularly similarity between beliefs, attitudes, and values, are critical for attraction, studies that have explored the antecedents of this similarity have shown that proximity, exposure and familiarity influence who gets to meet whom. For example, Festinger, Schachter and Back (1950) studied patterns of friendship in a university campus housing complex. They found that people were most friendly with people who lived next door, next most friendly with people who lived two doors away, and least friendly with people who lived a corridor's length away. Moreover, people who lived near stairs had more friends than those living farthest away from the stairs. Proximity, then, seems to increase the number of opportunities for interaction, but why should it increase the number of friendships?

Studies that have looked at exposure find that overwhelmingly, greater exposure is associated with more positive outcomes. An illustrative study was conducted by Saegert, Swap and Zajonc, (1973). These researchers studied women involved in a liquid-tasting experiment in which the participants were not allowed to talk to each other and were focused on the task. They found that the number of occasions that the women incidentally encountered each other (i.e. in the course of the tasting) was positively associated with preference for other people: i.e. the more one women encountered another, even when there was no noticeable interaction, the more the women had a positive view of the other person. Many other studies support the finding that increased exposure is related to attraction. 'Most of the research on familiarity has supported the positive outcome of repeated exposure' (Gross, 1992, p. 500). However,

whilst familiarity, exposure and proximity are factors influencing the attraction between people, the research evidence from the interpersonal attractiveness, love, and relationships literatures, clearly support Schneider's hypothesis that similarity is the key determinant in shaping attraction.

Finally, a recent study by Turban (2001) suggests that the research findings on familiarity from the general psychology literature have direct relevance to the industrial and organisational domains. He examined familiarity during organisational recruitment into a petrochemical firm in the USA. He surveyed mainly engineering students at 'top-tier' universities in the USA for their impressions of the firm (image, compensation, security, challenge etc.) familiarity with the firm, and its recruitment activities. He found support for the hypothesis that familiarity is positively associated with attraction to the firm. Indeed, he found that familiarity had both direct and indirect effects on the attractiveness of potential employers.

Recruitment

As Schneider (1987) refers to the ASA framework as a 'natural cycle' (p. 446) in which 'over time, persons attracted to, selected by, staying with, and behaving in organisations cause them to be what they are' (p. 445), there is a strong inference that the attraction phase of the framework is associated with the recruitment phase of organisational entry, i.e. the phase of organisational entry that occurs prior to selection. This inference is problematic because although the two processes of recruitment and selection might appear to be separate and sequential, in practice the two processes are intertwined. This intertwining is demonstrated in the commonly cited definitions of the word 'recruitment'.

Two commonly cited definitions of recruitment come from Rynes (1991) and Breaugh (1992). Rynes (1991) defined recruitment as 'encompass[ing] all organisational practices and decisions that affect either the number, or types, of individuals who are willing to apply for, or to accept, a given vacancy' (p. 429). Breaugh (1992) offers a similar definition: 'recruitment involves those organisational activities that (1) influence the number and/or types of applicants who apply for a position and/or (2) affect

whether a job is accepted' (p. 4). Barber (1998) notes that these definitions are problematical because they confuse recruitment processes with recruitment outcomes (i.e. applicants' own selection decisions). Prior to these inclusive definitions, Rynes and Barber (1990) separated attraction and recruitment. They did this because they noted that recruitment processes were just one means in which people are attracted to organisations. Many other factors influence peoples' decisions to apply to organisations. For example, many organisations have strong public images that influence perceptions, such as the strong images often associated with car manufacturers and oil companies (Hatch, 1997). Some people will have interacted with organisations in the normal course of life creating impressions. Hence, attractiveness can be shaped both generally in the normal course of events and specifically during a recruitment and selection exercise. Moreover, an employee's attraction to an organisation can increase during employment, which is a form of socialisation.

Attraction, then, is not confined to the recruitment phase of organisational entry. It seems instead that there are three different phases of attraction. The first of these phases is prior to any thought of employment, i.e. contact between individual and the organisation in the normal course of life. The second phase is during the individual's entry into the organisation. The third phase is during the individual's employment. Schneider's reference to the vocational and job choice literatures and the position of attraction prior to selection in the ASA framework suggest that he intends his framework to reflect that attraction is mainly associated with the first and second phases described above. Moreover, it is possible to make a strong case that attraction is most important, or at its most powerful, during organisational entry episodes. This is a period in someone's life when they are particularly keen to understand the nature of the organisation they are about to enter. They are particularly sensitive to any clues that can give them a sense of what working in the organisation will be like (Chatman, 1989).

Boudreau and Rynes (1985) provide a systematic classification of the transitions that applicants move through during organisational entry. The first group is the applicant population. The researchers define this as the group of people from which the organisation is likely to find suitable people. The second group is the applicant pool, which contains those people that have

chosen to apply for the vacancies. The third group is the selectees, who are those people from the applicant pool who are offered employment. This classification is useful because it provides a framework that can be used to segment the recruitment phase that might otherwise be considered a dynamic environment with no structure. This framework allows for the comparison of people as they move from one category to the next so that attraction effects might be studied in more detail.

P–O Fit Studies of Attraction

The empirical studies of attraction within the P–O fit literature can be divided into two categories. The first category of studies has explored the nature of attraction and the antecedents of P–O fit at this stage of the cycle. The second category of studies explores the consequences of P–O fit. The first category contains three studies. The first of these was conducted by Rynes et al (1991). During the early and mid 1990s, researchers' attention was more concerned with consequence studies, but recently, two more studies (Judge and Cable, 1997; Lievens, Decaesteker, Coetsier and Geirnaert, 2001) have revived interest in the antecedents of job seekers' P–O fit assessments.

Rynes et al (1991) held in-depth critical incident interviews with 40 graduates about their perceptions of the things that influenced their recruitment actions. These perceptions surfaced some antecedents of applicants' P–O fit. Three factors emerged as being responsible for perceptions of fit in the early stages of the recruitment and selection process: (1) perceived job and organisational characteristics, (2) interactions with formal organisational representatives, and (3) contacts with other people (besides recruiters) already employed by the organisation. This study is interesting because it demonstrates that fit develops during the organisational entry process; fit is only partially formed at the time of the initial application and it is mainly based a superficial assessment of the organisation. This superficial assessment is based on the reputation of the company, attitudes towards the product or industry, perceived status of the interviewee's functional area, and geographic location. These findings suggest that P–O fit is only likely to have a small impact on applicants' initial application to

organisations, but that it becomes more important the further into the process that applicants travel.

The second category of P–O fit attraction studies is much larger than the first. These studies examine the nature of decisions that applicants make based on their degree of fit. In summary, these studies show that people tend to choose jobs and careers that correspond to their own values and preferences, as the following summaries demonstrate.

Bretz, et al (1989) showed that people are attracted to environments that would allow them to address their need to achieve, but not for their need to affiliate. These researchers conducted a laboratory experiment that measured personality and then presented the participants with descriptions of organisations with reward systems that had been manipulated. They found that people with a high need for achievement disproportionally chose organisations with individually-focused reward systems.

Judge and Bretz (1992) surveyed students in two American universities. The students were asked for their values and then presented with a number of work scenarios in which eleven organisational and value variables were manipulated. They were asked the probability of whether or not they would accept a job offer from the organisation in each scenario. As predicted by the researchers, value alignment between students and the manipulated scenarios was positively related to the students' job choice decisions.

Turban and Keon (1993) asked management students to indicate their attraction to paper descriptions of organisations in which various characteristics were manipulated. They found that people with a high need to achieve were more attracted to organisations that offered a merit-based reward structure (i.e. those that rewarded performance over seniority) than people with a low need to achieve. They also showed that people with low self-esteem were more attracted to decentralised organisational structures (and larger firms) than people with high self-esteem. These results suggest that people are attracted to organisations that mirror their personality.

Cable and Judge (1994) examined whether congruence of one aspect of the organisational environment, the pay and compensation system, with individual personality traits influenced the job search decisions of engineering and hotel administration students approaching graduation. The researchers

asked engineering and hotel administration students to evaluate thirty-two different pay and compensation scenarios. They found that the attractiveness of the pay policies of organisations was heightened by greater levels of 'fit' between individual personality traits and the characteristics of the compensation system. If pay and compensation systems are structured according to the values, goals and culture of the organisation, then the fit of individuals to the pay systems is an indication of their fit to the organisation as a whole.

These four studies provide interesting glimpses of the consequences of applicant P–O fit on the attractiveness of organisations. However, they all have a laboratory form in which non-applicants rate the attractiveness of hypothetical organisations. As mentioned in Chapter 2, such laboratory experiments are likely to over-emphasise situational variables and mask individual differences. Moreover, whilst these studies provide support for the hypothesis that similarity leads to attraction, the decisions of people in artificial situations does not necessarily accord with actual behaviour. Subsequent research, therefore, explored the behaviour and perceptions of 'real' applicants.

Cable and Judge (1996) investigated the P–O fit perceptions of job seekers. The job seekers were undergraduate applicants to thirty-five organisations who were recruiting through the 'milk round' of a large university in the north east of the USA. The job seekers were asked to report three pieces of information. First, they were asked for their perceptions of the attractiveness of the job attributes for a job for which they had just been interviewed. Second, they reported their perceived fit with the company and the job. Third, they completed a modified version of the Organisational Culture Profile (OCP; O'Reilly et al, 1991; reduced from O'Reilly et al's 52 items to a more manageable 40 and conducted on paper rather than sorting cards; the strengths and weaknesses of this method are discussed in Chapters 7 and 8) to report their perceptions of the company's values. Once the 'milk round' was completed, the job seekers completed a second battery of assessments. These included reports of demographics, values, academic record, and their final job choice. Finally, six months later, the ex-job seekers were surveyed for their assessments of their perceived fit with their job and

their organisation and for some job attitudes (such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment). The researchers found that applicants' perceived value congruence (i.e. OCP derived measure of P–O fit) was predictive of their perceptions of their own fit (i.e. fit measured via direct questions, such as "To what degree do you feel your values 'match' or fit this organisation and the current employees in this organisation?" (Cable and Judge, 1996, p. 299)). Interestingly, whilst the hypothesis was supported, the correlation between the two variables was quite low ($r = .33, p < .05, n = 273$), raising intriguing measurement issues, which are discussed later in Chapter 7. The researchers also found that job seekers' subjective P–O fit perceptions (direct questions) significantly predicted their job choice intentions ($r = .54, p < .05, n = 273$) and that job seekers' perceived value congruence (OCP derived) also predicted job choice intentions ($r = .24, p < .05, n = 273$), albeit rather less strongly.

This study has been described in some detail due to its direct relevance to the present study. The researchers used both direct and indirect measures of P–O fit. Direct measures of fit confront the person with a question (or suite of questions) that asks directly for that person's impressions or perceptions about their fit. Indirect methods, on the other hand, use other methods to arrive at a measure of fit. In this case, the people were asked for their own values and their impressions of the values of the organisation at two different time periods. From these two sets of data, a measure of fit could be calculated. As assessments of the organisation's values were supplied by the job seekers, rather than providing a profile of the organisation's values for comparison of job seeker's values against, in the manner of Chatman (1991), the researchers' measure of indirect P–O fit remained a measure of perceived fit, rather than actual fit (i.e. fit to the values of the organisation). The researchers argue that perceived fit is crucial in shaping job seekers' job choice decisions. However, Schneider's attraction hypothesis refers to 'actual' fit (i.e. fit between the applicants' values etc. and the organisation's values etc.). Consequently, the Cable and Judge (1996) study cannot be considered a direct test of Schneider's attraction hypothesis. That said, the study does provide circumstantial evidence supporting Schneider's attraction hypothesis; if applicants choose to join organisations that they believe they will fit, it seems more likely than not that they will choose to join organisations that they actually fit.

A year later, the same authors published a follow-up study that employed a similar design (Judge and Cable, 1997). In addition, they also captured students' Big Five personality traits. The authors found similar findings with both subjective (direct questions) and objective (OCP derived) fit being associated with organisation attractiveness. Interestingly though, neither subjective nor objective fit were associated with offer acceptance. As with the authors' previous study, this study was not a direct test of Schneider's attraction hypothesis as there was no measure of the organisation's actual values. However, this study did add to our understanding of the antecedents of P–O fit by hypothesising links between some of the Big Five personality traits and factors in the OCP and then producing data to support most of the hypothesised links (such as between extraversion and 'team-oriented' and between openness and innovative).

Lievens et al (2001) presented Flemish-speaking engineering and business students in Belgium with profiles of organisations in which four characteristics (company size, level of internationalisation, pay mix, and level of centralisation) were manipulated. They asked the students to indicate their attraction to each profile. In addition, the students self-reported their Big Five personality factors. The researchers hypothesised associations between attractiveness, personality traits, and the organisational characteristics drawing on the work of Turban and Keon (1993), Cable and Judge (1994), Judge and Cable (1997), and the Big Five literature. This allowed the researchers to explore both the antecedents and consequences of P–O fit in the same study. With regard to the consequences of fit, the researchers could not find evidence to support earlier findings that pay had an effect on organisational attractiveness. But they did support the earlier finding that the level of centralisation (i.e. decentralisation was more attractive) was an important (in this study, the most important) factor on attractiveness. When looking at the antecedents of P–O fit, the researchers hypothesised and found that two personality traits moderated the relationship between organisational attributes and organisational characteristics. In particular, students low on openness/intellect were more attracted to national organisations than students high on the same dimension, and conscientious students were more attracted to large organisations than students with low levels of conscientiousness. Other

hypothesises were not supported. Clearly this study does not directly test Schneider's attraction hypothesis, but it does provide a European set of data to compete with the data from American studies. Interestingly, the results do not always mirror the American results suggesting that care needs to be taken when extrapolating from the American studies. Moreover, it suggests that the suitability of measures and methods needs to be tested prior to use on a non-American audience.

Conclusion

This chapter has critically examined the theoretical and empirical support for Schneider's assertion that similarity leads to attraction and his attraction proposition. Overwhelmingly, the evidence supports the view that similarity leads to attraction and that it is moderated by proximity, exposure, and familiarity. Findings from studies in both the general psychology and the industrial/organisational psychology literatures provide corroboration. Turning to the attraction hypothesis, which states that organisations will attract people who share their values (personality, attitudes, goals etc.), this review demonstrates that there have been no direct tests of the hypothesis. There are many related tests that generally support the tenor of the hypothesis. These include a study by Cable and Judge (1996) that demonstrates that applicants choose to join organisations that they believe they will fit, which is just a short step away from demonstrating that applicants choose to join organisations that they 'actually' fit. This study could easily be redesigned to conceptualise organisational values in terms of organisational members' values (or values of the organisation) rather than applicants' perceptions of them. Whilst such a study may, or may not, explain applicants' behaviours less closely, it would be a direct test of Schneider's attraction hypothesis.

This review of the studies related to the attraction hypothesis yielded several other important considerations for this present study. First, it stresses the importance of values, as perceived value congruence has been shown to influence the job choices of job seekers. In contrast, the alignment of job seekers' personality (and other dimensions of individual difference) with the characteristics of organisations has received less attention. Second, this review

has provided a framework for attraction decisions and suggested that stages of organisational entry prior to selection by the organisation should be the focus of interest to test Schneider's attraction hypothesis. Third, the study by Lievens et al (2001) has emphasised the importance of testing the appropriateness of American fit tools and assumptions prior to their use on a non-American audience.

CHAPTER 4

SELECTION

The selection phase in Schneider's ASA framework is the process by which organisations select people who share the values of the organisation. When Schneider (1987) describes this phase of the ASA framework, he refers to the role of founders to justify this proposition. Drawing strongly on Schein's work (Schein, 1993), Schneider argues that organisations, or at least their management, are a reflection of their founder. Referring to Schein's case work, Schneider highlights how these founders chose "lieutenants" (Schein, 1993, p. 214) who "shared the founder's basic assumptions" (Schein, 1993, p. 214) and who "were usually people like himself" (Schein, p. 219). Although Schneider offers little more to justify his selection proposition, there are several streams of research that offer support to it.

First of all, the discussion of similarity in the previous chapter is just as relevant here. Schneider's selection proposition is built on the same premise as the attraction one: that similarity leads to the action of getting closer to someone (i.e. attraction). In the case of selection, the attraction leads to decisions by organisational representatives to offer jobs to people who have similar values to those of the recruiting organisations.

One of the reasons why Schneider might not have said much to support his selection proposition is that there are so many research findings supporting the idea that people select people like themselves, that he did not think he needed to repeat commonly known findings. An example of this research is the study conducted by Prewett-Livingston, Feild, Veres and Lewis (1996). These researchers looked at promotion interviews of police officers in an American metropolitan police department. The researchers were able to monitor the effects of race (Black and White) on ratings in situational interviews. They found that interviewees who were similar to interviewers

with respect to their race received higher ratings. Both Black and White raters gave higher ratings to candidates of their own race. This study adds support to the 'similar-to-me' effect (Rand & Wexley, 1975) which has been demonstrated in many similar studies (e.g. Krainger & Ford, 1985; Lin, Dobbins & Farh 1992; Peters & Terborg, 1975).

The 'similar-to-me' effect is not just limited to race. Laboratory experiments have shown that it also applies to gender (e.g. Binning, Goldstein, Garcia & Scattaregia, 1988; Gallois, Callan & Palmer, 1992; Wiley & Eskilson, 1985), but field studies (e.g. Graves & Powell, 1996) have produced mixed results. In a field study by Graves and Powell, the researchers found that male recruiters were not affected by sex similarity (or were able to suppress its influence), but that female recruiters sometimes are. Graves and Powell (1996) also found that female recruiters reported better interview experiences with female applicants and evaluated them more favourably.

The similar-to-me effect is not confined to race and gender effects. Orpen (1984) examined the interview decisions of interviewers for sales positions in four large South African insurance companies. He found that the interviewers' personal liking, actual similarity and perceived similarity to the interviewees were all directly related to the selection decision.

Findings of this sort merely confirm what is already known: selection is not a perfect science and individuals make 'similar-to-me' assessments (Herriot, 1989b). As a result, legislation has emerged over the past forty years to protect those groups of people who are disadvantaged and who have been able to influence legislators about the needs of their case. Hence, most countries now have laws to protect the genders from unfair discrimination. Many countries have laws to protect races and religions. The trend is towards legislation to protect other groups disadvantaged during selection such as the disabled and the elderly (Hogarth, 1992). With such weight of evidence pointing towards the similarity effect in selection, it cannot be surprising that Schneider takes his selection proposition for granted and sees little need to justify it.

Selecting for P–O fit

P–O fit research after Schneider's original proposition provides support that organisations want to select people who hold the values of the organisation. For example, Rynes and Gerhart (1990) examined the recruiting decisions of managers interviewing MBA graduates from an Ivy League business school for positions in mainly financial and general management. They separated out three different ways in which interviewers form their impressions of P–O fit. The first way is congruence between the values of the applicant and the recruiter. In other words, the recruiter makes the selection decision on fit based on a 'similar-to-me' judgement. The researchers termed this form of fit 'idiosyncratic fit' (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990, p. 16) because it is individual to each recruiter. They did not regard this form of fit as a form of P–O fit because it was about fit to an individual rather than fit to an organisation. The second type of fit assessment that recruiters make is to compare applicants to some form of agreed notion of the characteristics needed to fit a particular organisation. This is a 'similar to us' judgement and they termed this form of fit, 'firm-specific employability' (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990, p. 15). The third form of fit that recruiters might make is to compare applicants to a non-firm-specific form of work suitability. In other words, some people might be better fitted to work in all organisations than others are. In other words, this is a form of general employability (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990, p. 15). The researchers found that interviewers of different organisations made different selection decisions regarding firm-specific employability, i.e. every organisation has a different set of requirements when assessing candidates for this form of employability, and that the interviewers were more stringent in their assessments of firm-specific employability than of general employability. In other words, interviewers seem to be more concerned to assess whether candidates are suited to the organisation than they are to assess whether candidates are more broadly suited for the type of work.

Bowen et al (1991) reviewed the recruitment and selection processes of three 'high involvement' organisations. The three organisations they concentrated on, AFG, Sun Microsystems and Toyota, all sought to recruit "self-motivated, committed people" (Bowen et al, 1991, p. 37) who share the

values of the organisation. Although these organisations may not be typical, it is interesting to note the length they are prepared to go to in order to recruit 'whole people' in the organisation's image. Toyota, for example, screens 50,000 applications for 3,000 jobs and "each employee hired invests at least eighteen hours in a selection process that includes a general knowledge exam, a test of attitudes toward work, an interpersonal skills assessment centre, a manufacturing exercise designed to provide a realistic job preview of assembly work, an extensive personal interview, and a physical exam" (Bowen et al, 1991, p. 36). The authors conclude by suggesting that the recruitment of individuals who fit the organisation's culture is a vital supplement to recruitment on grounds of person–job fit because it helps organisations create a distinctive culture which is maintained by people sharing the organisation's values and goals. In an organisational environment characterised by rapid and regular change, transition and development, the authors argue that recruiting 'whole people' who fit the overall organisation, rather than those who fit a fixed set of task demands, is the only solution.

Anecdotal evidence for selectors' desire to recruit for fit and to seek homogeneity as an outcome of the recruitment process comes from Judge and Ferris (1992). In their review of selection in the 1970s and 1980s, these researchers captured references in the literature when organisational recruiters have expressed a desire to recruit for fit. Amongst the companies mentioned are Sears Roebuck, General Motors, and Hewlett-Packard. These corporations employed very different methods to make these fit assessments of applicants. Sears Roebuck used height as an indicator as an important staffing criterion, which seems inappropriate today. General Motors looked at employees' interpersonal behaviour as a guide to their fit and suitability for promotion. Hewlett-Packard relied on interviews to assess fit.

These three studies demonstrate that some organisational recruiters are keen to select applicants who are 'similar to us': i.e. they want to select people who share the values of the organisation. However, whilst these organisations have the intention to select people in this way, these studies do not explore Schneider's selection proposition directly; i.e. whether or not they actually manage to select for fit.

Tests of Schneider's selection proposition

There have been very few studies of the selection phase of Schneider's ASA framework. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, many P–O fit studies relevant to Schneider's framework have focused on the outcomes of P–O fit and examined people in employment, rather than people looking for employment. Only two studies could be found that investigated Schneider's selection proposition, namely Adkins et al, (1994) and Cable and Judge (1997). These two studies follow the leads of Schneider (1987) and Chatman (1989) and use value congruence as the currency to explore the fit between applicants and the recruiting organisation.

The study by Adkins et al (1994) explored Rynes and Gerhart's (1990) finding that firm-specific employability (i.e. P–O fit) is more important to recruiters than general employability or idiosyncratic fit. Rynes and Gerhart's earlier study had not delineated the components or currency of this firm-specific employability; it had just found the effect. The study of Adkins et al (1994) used Chatman's (1989, 1991) assertion that value congruence is central to fit to explore the nature of firm-specific employability. They investigated whether or not the congruence between applicants' work values and those of the organisation contribute to recruiters' judgements of P–O fit. The researchers studied the interview decisions of corporate recruiters during the 'milk round' using the Comparative Emphasis Scale (CES: Ravlin and Meglino, 1987a, 1987b, 1989). Recruiters completed the CES twice; once for their own personal work values and once for their perceptions of the organisations' work values. After each interview, the recruiters were asked to rate each applicant on P–O fit and general employability. Adkins et al (1994) replicated Rynes and Gerhart's (1990) finding that it is possible to distinguish between firm-specific and general employability. These researchers also found that the recruiters' assessment of the fit of applicants to the organisation is significantly correlated with the recruiters' own values, albeit weakly ($r=.11$, $p<.05$). Their results also suggest that congruence between applicants and the organisation, as judged by the interviewer, did not influence recruiting organisations' selection decisions, which is contrary to Schneider's selection proposition. However, it is not a refutation of Schneider's selection

proposition for two reasons. First, the CES (as will be discussed further in Chapter 7) is limited as an instrument to capture P–O fit. Second, this study was concerned with recruiters' perceptions of applicants' fit. Hence, it does not measure whether or not applicants actually fit with organisations' values, but rather measures selectors' perceptions of that fit, which might be incorrect.

The most extensive examination of P–O fit during selection was carried out by Cable and Judge (1997). These researchers considered the P–O fit assessments of interviewers during selection interviews. Building on the work of Schneider (1987), Rynes and Gerhart (1990), Bowen et al (1991) and Adkins et al (1994), they hypothesised that (1) interviewers' perceptions of the P–O fit of their interviewees would be associated with their actual P–O fit, (2) these perceptions would positively affect their subjective assessments of P–O fit, (3) these perceptions would also positively affect their hiring recommendations, and (4) these hiring recommendations would influence their organisations' hiring decisions. These four sequential hypothesises produce a model that they tested this model by looking at the decisions of 38 interviewers recruiting on the college 'milk round' in an American university. Their main measure was the OCP, from which they removed items that were "too similar" (Cable & Judge, 1997, p. 550), which reduced the OCP from 54 to 40 items. Interviewers were asked to complete the 'card sort' as a 'paper and pencil' test, ranking the 40 items in order of "most characteristic of my organisation" to "least characteristic of my organisation". In addition, interviewers were asked to assess every person they interviewed using the same tool, but with the prompt being "to what degree is this a characteristic of the applicant I interviewed?". Interviewees were also asked to complete the same tool, but the prompt was changed to "how characteristic is this attribute of me?". In addition, the researchers asked the interviewers for their subjective assessment of every candidate they interviewed with a single item "to what degree does this applicant match or fit your organisation and the current employees in your organisation?". The researchers also had items for interviewers to report their impressions of the physical attractiveness and their 'liking' of every applicant. The results supported all four hypothesises and the model. In addition, the researchers found that interviewees who were

personally liked by the interviewers were more likely to be recommended for hire than less-liked interviewees were.

Cable and Judge's study is interesting because their findings support Schneider's selection proposition. These findings suggest that interviewers base their P–O fit evaluations on the congruence between their perceptions of applicants' values and their perception of the organisations' values. In addition, these P–O fit evaluations are significantly related to their selection decisions and those of their organisations, although their subjective P–O fit assessments (i.e. their gut feel about the applicants) are more influential than their assessment of actual value congruence (i.e. a calculation of fit based on the interviewee's self-reported values and interviewers' perceptions of the values of their organisation). This is evidence that adds weight to the proposition that values are an important component of P–O fit. Despite the support these findings offer to Schneider's selection proposition, this study is not a direct test of the proposition. Briefly stated, Schneider's proposition says that organisations select people who share the values of the organisation. In the Cable and Judge (1997) study, the source of the organisational values is the interviewers. These are not 'checked' or agreed with other organisational representatives. This is important because it is generally accepted that measures of the organisational values must capture communal agreement, rather than the views of individuals (Chatman, 1989, 1991; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). It is interesting to understand how interviewers' perceptions of their organisations' values influences their assessments of P–O fit because of the central role of interviewers in selection decisions (Dipboye, 1992), but the interviewers' assessment of their organisations' values might be at variance with how other people in the organisation view the organisation's values. In effect, it is a form of what Rynes and Gerhart (1990) call 'idiosyncratic fit'. Even though corporate interviewers tend to be organisations' 'great and good' (Dipboye, 1992; Schneider 1987), these are still idiosyncratic perceptions of their organisations' values.

A second reason why the Cable and Judge (1997) study cannot be considered a direct test of Schneider's selection proposition is that it only considers one variable in the selection decision. As mentioned above, interviewers' decisions are important, but they are not the only factor. Other

factors might include the decisions of other interviewers, applicants' own decisions about whether to continue their interest in the position, other selection tests and filters some of which involve other individuals and others that do not, people conducting job analyses, and the impact of trade unions and other bodies. All of these factors might influence decisions about which applicants organisations select.

Hence, the Cable and Judge (1997) study offers insights about a central process in the making of the selection decision and these insights are in-line with Schneider's proposition, but it does not address the main proposition directly. As such, this study tackles a subplot, rather than the main theme. A more direct test of Schneider's selection proposition would be to measure the congruence between the values of applicants and organisations, thereby removing the surrogate role that interviewers' values play.

Conclusion

This chapter has critically examined the support for Schneider's selection proposition that organisations select people who share their values (personality, attitudes, goals etc.). Like the attraction proposition, the selection proposition is based on a 'similar-to-me' effect. This effect has been found in many different streams of the selection literature. In addition, there is a small body of literature illustrating that some organisations actively try to select people who share their values.

Turning to empirical tests of Schneider's selection proposition, this review demonstrates that there have been no direct tests of the hypothesis. There are several related tests that generally support the tenor of the proposition. These include a study by Cable and Judge (1997) that shows that the subjective P–O fit assessments of selection interviewers, the congruence between the interviewees' values and the interviewers' assessment of their organisations' values, and the selection interviewers' personal liking of interviewees all influence hiring decisions.

This is just a short step away from demonstrating that applicants are selected by organisations when there is alignment of their values with the values of the organisation. This study could easily be redesigned to

conceptualise organisational values in terms of organisational members' values (or values of the organisation) rather than interviewers' perceptions of them. Such a study would be a direct test of Schneider's selection hypothesis.

CHAPTER 5

ATTRITION

Attrition is the phase of the ASA cycle that has received most attention. Several studies (e.g. Boxx et al, 1991; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991) have tested Schneider's proposition directly and numerous others offer indirect support (e.g. Jackson et al, 1991; Ostroff & Rothausen, 1997; Posner, 1992; Posner, Kouzes & Schmidt, 1985; Schaubroeck et al, 1998; Sheridan, 1992; Van Vianen, 2000). For this reason, the attrition proposition is not a focus of attention in this study. However, there are three reasons why a short chapter on attrition is included. First, there is a sense that such a chapter must be included for reasons of completeness. Second, one of the most direct tests of Schneider's attrition proposition, the study by Chatman (1991), serves as a model for the present study of the attraction and selection propositions. As such, this study is worth examining in depth. Third, three other studies conducted in this domain – those of O'Reilly et al (1991), Sheridan (1992), and Van Vianen (2000) – yield interesting findings that address key concerns in the present study.

Theoretical underpinnings

Whereas the attraction and selection propositions are built on the idea that similarity leads to attraction, the attrition proposition is built on the idea that dissimilarity leads to attrition. Schneider (1987) cites the realistic job preview and vocational psychology literatures to support his idea. In brief, the realistic job preview literature shows that the better that newcomers' expectations fit the reality of organisational life, the higher job satisfaction and longer tenure becomes (Premack & Wanous, 1985) and the staff turnover

literature shows that some people who are attracted to an organisation find they do not fit and decide to leave. Schneider's justification is limited to one paragraph and is therefore very abbreviated. Superficially the two citations he mentions (Mobley, 1982; Premack & Wanous, 1985) do not appear to offer much support for his idea that dissimilarity leads to organisational exit as both of his examples could be interpreted as being about incorrectly formed expectations rather than about dissimilarity (of values, personality, goals etc.). We must look elsewhere for theoretical support for the proposition.

The interpersonal relationships literature yielded the 'similar-to-me' notion that supports Schneider's attraction proposition. The same literature is also concerned with how relationships terminate. But whereas this literature is very clear that similarity is a powerful factor influencing attraction, it is much less clear that dissimilarity is a powerful cause of relationship termination. Indeed, studies find that it is usually just one of many different factors causing relationship termination. For example, Duck (1988) was able to identify four contextual antecedents of divorce and marital unhappiness of which demographic difference was just one. The other three contextual antecedents were age, socio-economic and education status. In addition, marriages in which one of the couple has experienced parental divorce or has had a larger number of sexual partners than the average were likely to experience a higher divorce rate. Duck (1988) adds a further six major causes of divorce: lack of skills in self-expression, rule-breaking, deception, lack of stimulation (i.e. boredom and tiredness), maintenance problems (such as relocation), and conflict.

Perhaps it is not surprising that there is less clarity about the causes of break-up compared to the causes of attraction. Attraction takes place in a context of information paucity; the two parties meet each other knowing very little, if anything, about each other. Consequently, there are relatively few factors that enter the equation. Break-up, on the other hand, occurs in a situation of information overload. Each party knows a lot more about each other and there are many more factors influencing the decision. Moreover, dissimilarity is likely to have been filtered out during the attraction phase, making it less likely to appear as a cause of many break-ups. It is also known that triggering events initiate the process of break-ups and these are unlikely to

be associated with dissimilarity (Lee, 1984; Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel & Hill, 1999).

The focus of much attention in the break-up literature is the transaction between the two parties. Exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1974; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) posits that marriages break-up when one of the parties does not feel that he or she is getting a 'fair' return for their investment into the relationship. Aronson and Linder (1965) proposed a 'gain–loss' theory to explain break-ups that also focused on the expectations of parties in a relationship. Their 'gain–loss' theory suggests that someone who starts out liking or expecting a lot from someone else and then changes their feelings is likely to feel much more negative towards the other person than someone who disliked him or her from the start. In common parlance, this explains why the person who gives up smoking often becomes a very strong anti-smoking advocate. In the occupational psychology literature, studies of violations of the psychological contract between employee and employer echo these approaches with breaches of perception and expectation, rather than dissimilarity, being considered more important (Bies & Moag, 1986; Rousseau & Aquino, 1993). The studies of employee turnover also suggest that people leave organisations for a great range of reasons (e.g. Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000; Hom & Kinicki, 2001; Lee et al, 1999; Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski & Erez, 2001). For example, a meta-analysis of the antecedents of employee turnover (Griffeth et al, 2000) shows that the best predictors of turnover include poor job satisfaction, poor organisational commitment, and withdrawal behaviours (e.g. looking for work elsewhere, having the intent to leave, comparing alternatives). Less powerful predictors include the content of work, stress, work group cohesion, autonomy, perceptions of distributive justice and promotional chances. Dissimilarity is rarely mentioned as a predictor of turnover.

This short review of the theoretical framework associated with Schneider's attrition proposition suggests that dissimilarity is too simplistic a factor to explain staff turnover fully. However, Schneider did not argue that dissimilarity was the only factor, just that it has a noticeable effect that will contribute towards the homogeneity of organisations. In addition, value congruence has been argued to be an antecedent of job satisfaction and

organisational commitment (Spector, 1997), which are strong predictors of turnover (Griffeth et al, 2000).

Direct tests of Schneider's attrition proposition

The attrition phase of the ASA framework has received most research attention (Kristof, 1996). Despite the comparative weakness of the theory underpinning the attrition effect, the empirical studies (e.g. Boxx et al, 1991; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Ostroff & Rothausen, 1997; Posner, 1992; Posner et al, 1985; Van Vianen, 2000; Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991) yield strong support for the idea that employees' P–O fit is a predictor of turnover and turnover's antecedents (e.g. satisfaction, commitment, and intention to quit). As these studies produce such strong support for Schneider's attrition proposition the present study does not explore it. However, amongst these studies of the attrition proposition, four are reviewed below because they have particular relevance for the present study.

The study by O'Reilly et al (1991) is interesting for two reasons. First, to capture individual and organisational values, these researchers had to develop a new research tool; the Organisational Culture Profile (OCP). This tool has become the most commonly used tool to capture P–O fit. The OCP was the starting point for the main research tool in the present study and it is discussed in more depth in Chapter 7. Second, this study provided some longitudinal data that correlated P–O fit on entry to an organisation with normative commitment ($r=.25$, $p<.01$), job satisfaction ($r=.35$, $p<.01$), and intent to leave the organisation ($r=-.37$, $p<.01$) one year later. Two years after entry, the researchers measured the actual turnover of staff. The results of survival analysis indicate that P–O fit positively predicts the probability of a person staying with an organisation.

Chatman's 1991 study is of particular interest as it investigated the attrition phase of the ASA cycle in a manner that the present study borrows to test the attraction and selection propositions of Schneider. Chatman looked at whether the value congruence between individuals and organisations would predict socialisation experience, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment. The participants were eight large accounting firms and their

graduate recruits. Chatman asked senior representatives of each firm to use the OCP to capture their organisations' values. The same tool was used to capture the values of the newcomers on entry. Over the following two and a half years, data on a range of measures were collected from the newcomers. Just as O'Reilly et al (1991) found, P–O fit at entry was predictive of job satisfaction ($r=.39$, $p>.01$), intent to leave ($r=-.31$, $p>.01$), and turnover ($r=-.35$, $p>.01$) one year later. This study also looked at the antecedents of P–O fit. Regression analysis showed that when applicants spent more time with organisational members prior to entry, their P–O fit was greater. The study also showed that greater amounts of social interaction with fellow employees increased P–O fit during the first year of employment. Chatman also found that when newcomers' value preferences became more closely aligned with their organisations' values, corresponding increases in job satisfaction also occurred. These findings provide strong support for Schneider's attrition proposition. However, the study has its limitations. One limitation that might be important for the present study is Chatman's choice of industry. She chose the public accounting industry and entry into it from university. This is an industry that has a strong professional culture and the accounting firms might be regarded as guardians of entry to the profession. Hence, although Chatman was able to differentiate between the value profiles of the eight organisations and between P–O fit and P–J fit, there is a suspicion that her measure of P–O fit includes some aspects of person–vocation fit (Sheridan, 1992). A replication of this study on a more general population not influenced by a 'professional' or 'vocational' culture that confounds the results would be valuable.

The study by Sheridan (1992) looked at how voluntary and involuntary staff turnover is influenced by organisational values. He used the OCP and found that a factor analysis of its items yielded seven cultural dimensions utilising 27 of the OCP's 54 value statements: detail, stability, innovation, team orientation, respect for people, outcome, and aggressiveness. These seven dimensions were classified in three groups: work task values, interpersonal relationship values, and individual behaviour values. Although the effect sizes are small, Sheridan (1992) was able to demonstrate that organisational culture values have a significant influence on retention rates.

He also found that organisational culture had a weaker effect on turnover rates when the newcomer emphasised interpersonal relationship values rather than work task values. In addition, organisations that emphasised work task values as part of their culture found that newcomers voluntarily quit their jobs at a much faster rate than those organisations whose culture emphasised interpersonal relationship values. This finding demonstrates that in addition to the fit between the employee and the employers' values, the nature of the situation also affects turnover behaviour. This finding prompted Sheridan to reflect on the nature of P–O fit as captured by the OCP. By adopting an ipsative method, the researcher is unable to differentiate between poor fit and 'misfit'. The OCP produces a ranking for every respondent. With a ranking, the researcher does not know whether the values at the bottom of the rank are just less important than the others higher up the rank (e.g. "I put teamwork at the bottom because although I want to work in teams the other items were more important to me"), irrelevant (e.g. "I put teamwork at the bottom because I don't really care if I work in teams or alone"), or particularly salient but in a reverse way (e.g. "I put teamwork at the bottom because I value working by myself"). Hence, the OCP produces a degree of fit score without a gauge of salience. By floating the idea of 'misfit', Sheridan hints that salience is an important issue with values. The subject of how values should be conceptualised and measured is dealt with in more depth in Chapters 7 and 8.

Van Vianen (2000) studied the effects of P–O fit on newcomers' commitment and turnover intentions. The 'twist' in this study was to revisit Schneider's model and reassess the organisational dimension that the participants (i.e. newcomers in this study) should be measured against. Previous studies (e.g. Cable & Judge, 1997; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) compared the values of newcomers, applicants or employees with the values of the organisation as perceived by organisational members (e.g. interviewers, senior executives, other employees). Van Vianen (2000) reviewed Schneider's original paper and realised that the organisational reference group could be conceptualised in another way. Rather than comparing individuals' values to organisational members' assessments of the organisation's values, as most of the studies in the P–O fit literature had done, she realised that she could compare individuals' values to other individuals'

values. By conceptualising fit in this way, Van Vianen aligns fit more closely with Schneider's homogeneity hypothesis, which compares people to people, rather than people to organisational environments, than P–O fit does. This conceptualisation of fit is also more clearly aligned with the 'similar-to-me' hypothesis. Schneider recognised this way of conceptualising fit himself and in his organisational homogeneity study (Schneider et al, 1998) as he compared people's personalities to find congruence. Van Vianen (2000) called her new form of fit person–people fit (P–P fit), which captures the fit between people rather than the fit between people and perceptions of environments. In doing this, she avoided what Stackman, Pinder and Connor (2000) called 'anthropomorphism error'. Van Vianen's results revealed that newcomers' P–P fit is related to their commitment and turnover intentions, but she was unable to find the same effects for newcomers' P–O fit.

Conclusion

This short chapter has briefly reviewed the underpinning theory to support Schneider's attrition proposition that organisations retain those employees that share their values. It has also looked at a few of the empirical studies that have tested Schneider's attrition proposition.

This review has suggested that the theoretical underpinnings of Schneider's attrition hypothesis are quite weak. The interpersonal relationships literature shows that dissimilarity is just one of many antecedents of relationship break-up. The turnover literature talks more about triggering events, which are situational rather than about dissimilarity between parties. The main theories in this literature concern the violation of psychological contracts, exchange and equity issues, and the expectations of the people involved in relationships. There is also the practical issue of range restriction: If similarity is a key factor in determining which people get together, then dissimilarities in relationships will be rare. As Schneider himself explains, 'while people may be attracted to a place, they may make errors, and finding they do not fit, they will leave' (Schneider, 1987, p. 442). In summary, the notion that 'dissimilar-to-me' concerns will lead to attrition in organisational issues is only weakly supported by the evidence. It is interesting, therefore,

that the empirical studies into the attrition phase of the ASA cycle (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) offer strong support for the idea that organisations retain those members of staff who share their values.

Two other studies were discussed in this section. Sheridan's (1992) findings suggest that the type of values that people fit is an important consideration. The study by Van Vianen (2000) returned the P–O fit literature to its roots in Schneider (1987). She argued, and later demonstrated, that a 'similar-to-me' effect should involve a comparison of peoples' values, rather than a comparison of someone's values to the values of an abstract construct (the organisation) as perceived by its members. This will be a key idea in the present study.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND STRATEGY

Research Questions

The literature review on the preceding pages has focused on person–organisation fit (P–O fit). This is an important subject because it purports to explain why people behave as they do in organisations. Schneider's attraction–selection–attrition (ASA) cycle is an often-cited theory in this field. It has received attention because it sets out to explain why organisations look and feel as they do. This theory advances the idea that, without rectification, as organisations grow older they will increasingly be made up of people with similar values, goals, personalities etc. This homogenisation will cause organisations to become increasingly insular, detached from the competitive environment, and will experience "organisational dry rot" (Schneider, 1987, p. 445-6).

Schneider's ASA cycle has been investigated in two ways. First, several studies (Jordan et al, 1991; Schneider et al, 1998; Schaubroeck et al, 1998) have investigated whether or not the overall effect – i.e. the homogenisation of organisations – can be found. These studies demonstrate that organisations exhibit some employee personality trait homogeneity and they can be identified by the median personality profile of their employees. The second type of studies has investigated the individual stages in the cycle. The attrition phase is the most thoroughly studied phase of the cycle. Studies (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) have shown that the fit between an employee and the organisation predicts employee turnover and its associated antecedents of job satisfaction and organisational commitment. The two other phases of the ASA cycle, attraction and selection, have not received the same

degree of attention and the earlier literature review showed that there have been no direct tests of Schneider's attraction and selection propositions, although several indirect tests support them (Cable & Judge, 1996, 1997; Judge & Cable, 1997; Turban & Keon, 1993).

The present study will explore the gaps in the literature that this review has surfaced. These gaps are direct tests of Schneider's attraction and selection propositions. Precisely, the two research questions that this study addresses are:

1. *Are people attracted to apply for work in organisations when they are similar to the people employed by those organisations?*
2. *Do organisations select people who are similar to the people they currently employ?*

As the earlier literature review has shown there are many different ways to conceptualise and measure the various component parts of these questions. These methodological difficulties will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters. So far the literature review has:

- highlighted the importance of values as the currency of fit (e.g. Cable & Judge 1997; Chatman, 1989);
- shown that person–organisation value congruence predicts employee affective outcomes (Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991);
- demonstrated the usefulness of the OCP for capturing value congruence (Cable & Judge, 1997; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991); and,
- suggested that the alignment of peoples' values may be better suited to Schneider's propositions and more predictive of affective behaviours than the congruence between peoples' values and the values of organisations (Van Vianen, 2000).

Using these findings, it is possible to produce four working hypotheses to explore the two research questions of this present study. These are included

to help the reader follow the methodology chapters that follow. They will be developed further in Chapter 11, prior to the report on the main study.

Working Hypothesis 1a

The value congruence between applicants and the organisation will be greater than the value congruence between people in the applicant pool and the organisation.

Working Hypothesis 1b

The value congruence between applicants and the employees of the recruiting organisation will be greater than the value congruence between people in the applicant pool and the employees of the recruiting organisation.

Working Hypothesis 2a

Person–organisation value congruence will predict applicants' performance in the selection process.

Working Hypothesis 2b

The value congruence between applicants and the employees of the recruiting organisation will predict applicants' performance in the selection process.

Research Strategy

In Chapter 2, concerns with laboratory studies were discussed. To recap briefly, laboratory studies overemphasise personal or internal factors at the expense of external or situational factors. When the idea being tested involves an interaction of internal and external factors such a methodology may taint the results. The ASA cycle is built on interactive principles. Therefore, tests of the ASA propositions may be best conducted in the field so as to avoid this confound with ease. As the research questions and working hypotheses of this present study test two of the propositions of the ASA cycle, this study should be conducted in the field.

Conducting studies of recruitment and selection processes in the field with 'real' applicants places the researcher in an awkward position when he or she needs information from the applicants. This information must be gathered

without disrupting or altering the recruitment and selection process. In the following chapter, it will be argued that the existing measures of P–O fit are not suitable for use in British recruitment and selection processes for a number of reasons that will be fully explained. Consequently, a new measure had to be developed that could gather the required information quickly and unobtrusively from applicants and organisational members. This was based on the OCP, which was reduced and reformatted using a Likert scale. The five chapters in Section 2 describe how this tool was developed and tested through a series of pilot tests. In addition to the reduction and reformatting of the OCP, the other development includes a check on the appropriateness of the items in the OCP for a British context, an analysis of the revised measure's factor structure, a test–retest study of the instrument, and a trial of the revised tool in an engineering firm.

The three chapters in Section 3 contain the main study, which tests the research questions and working hypotheses of this present study. The main study was conducted on the graduate entry into a large utilities company in the United Kingdom. This company, herein termed 'PWT' (after the initial letters of the company's main areas of business which are 'power', 'water', and 'telecommunications') to preserve its confidentiality, operates as a series of separate businesses, although some processes (such as graduate recruitment) are co-ordinated at the corporate level. The nine largest of PWT's businesses allowed access to their applicants and employees and supplied data on selection decisions. The revised instrument was sent to applicants when their application was acknowledged with a request to complete it and return it direct to the researcher in a pre-paid addressed envelope. They were assured that the short questionnaire would not be used in the selection decision. So that the first two working hypotheses could be tested, the careers and placement services of the eleven universities that send most applicants to PWT were asked to distribute a similar questionnaire to people looking for work through the same 'milk round'. These respondents were asked which subjects they were studying and the type of work they were looking for so that suitable comparisons with the applicants to PWT could be made. In effect, these respondents are a control group against which applicants can be compared. Examining whether applicants' value congruence predicted how far they

progressed through the selection process tested the third and fourth working hypotheses. The revised instrument was completed by the senior team of each unit and by people in each recruiting department. The senior team members were asked to record their perceptions of their unit's values. The department members were asked to record their perceptions of their department's values and their own values. This permitted an analysis of P–O fit as recommended by Chatman (1991) and P–P fit as recommended by Van Vianen (2000).

SECTION 2

PILOT STUDIES

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CHAPTER 7

ISSUES IN MEASURING PERSON–ORGANISATION FIT

This part of the thesis reports on the development of a new instrument that can be used to capture P–O fit with geographically-remote and distant respondents. In brief summary, the characteristics of the new instrument include the:

1. definition of P–O fit in terms of the congruence between people and the organisations (i.e. supplementary fit),
2. employment of values as the currency of fit,
3. capture of actual rather than perceived fit,
4. use of the items in the OCP as a base from which to construct a tool suited to a British business situation, and,
5. adoption of a Likert scale rather than a Q-sort.

This chapter explains the reasons for these five decisions and reviews various other issues associated with the measurement of P–O fit. This is the foundation for the following chapters which describe the work that was done to develop and test a suitable measure of P–O fit for the present study; i.e. one that could be used with a large scale and dispersed sample based in the United Kingdom.

Defining P–O fit

In Chapter 1, Kristof's integrative definition of P–O fit was explained (Kristof, 1996). To recap briefly, this definition defines P–O fit as *the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar*

fundamental characteristics, or (c) both' (Kristof, 1996, pp. 4-5). As an integrative definition, the purpose is to draw the boundaries around the P–O fit domain: it describes which studies can be considered P–O fit and which studies cannot. There are two elements to the definition of P–O fit. First, it involves two interacting parties: individuals and organisations. And second, it requires the interaction to be either a complementary or a supplementary form of fit. The definition is not prescriptive about the currency of P–O fit. Kristof's definition is important because it describes the boundaries of P–O fit, but it is limited because within these boundaries it affords researchers little guidance as to how P–O fit should be conceptualised.

As the present study tests two of Schneider's propositions in his ASA framework, it is important that the definition of P–O fit in this present study sits comfortably with the underlying principles of the ASA framework. Those underlying principles were discussed in Chapter 2 of this present work. Developing that discussion below, it is possible to define P–O fit for the present study.

Complementary or supplementary fit?

In Chapter 1, complementary and supplementary forms of fit were described. To recap briefly, complementary fit exists when the characteristics of either the person or the environment 'make whole' the corresponding party or add to it what is missing and supplementary fit refers to similarity or congruence between features of the person and the environment. Then, in Chapter 2, Schneider's conceptualisation of fit was examined. The conclusion of that review was that whilst Schneider is not precise about how fit should be conceptualised in the ASA framework, the choice of words that he uses (e.g. match, share, modal, and congruence) all point towards a supplementary form of fit. Moreover, he adopts a supplementary form of fit in his test of the homogeneity hypothesis (Schneider et al, 1998). As a result, P–O fit will be defined in supplementary terms in the present study.

Values: The currency of fit

In Chapter 2, Schneider's imprecision on the currency of fit was explained. To recap briefly, although Schneider was initially vague about the currency of fit, his update on the ASA framework (Schneider et al, 1995) focused the attention of researchers on to personality, attitudes and values: 'Although not specified by B. Schneider, the clear implication in his 1987 paper is that the attributes of interest are personality, attitudes, and values" (Schneider et al, 1995, p. 749). The implication in Schneider's writings is that he conceptualises P–O fit as a construct made up of many and varied component parts of which personality, attitudes and values are thought to be some of the more important elements. Three reasons – (1) the need for a commensurate measure, (2) influence over individual behaviour, and (3) the centrality of values in P–O fit studies – lead to values being chosen as the currency of fit in the present study. These three reasons are discussed below.

O'Reilly et al (1991) have called for the use of commensurate measures when exploring the fit between individuals and organisations. Commensurate measures are ones which use the same language and content to describe both sides of the equation. O'Reilly et al (1991) argue that when individuals are described using one language or set of characteristics and situations are described with a totally different language or set of characteristics both methodological and theoretical problems follow. From a methodological point of view, the use of a different language or content will mask effects and make it difficult to determine the real interaction between people and situations. As a result of this, the researchers argue that when commensurate measures are not used to conceptualise both sides of the interaction it will limit our ability to develop a coherent theory of person–situation interactions (O'Reilly et al, 1991). More fundamentally, the use of commensurate measures ensures the mutual relevance of the characteristics under investigation (Caplan, 1987; Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996).

There are dissenting voices. Patsfall and Feimer (1985), for example, assert that the need for commensurate measures is a red herring because it is possible to test any individual construct against any organisational characteristic. Many of the studies outlined in earlier chapters do this. Turban

and Keon (1993), for example, were able to examine the interaction between peoples' need to achieve and organisational pay structures. Another difficulty with finding commensurate measures with which to study the interaction of individuals and organisations is associated with meaning. Although it might be possible to use the same idea to measure the two domains, it may have slightly different interpretations at the different levels (Kristof, 1996). Despite this caveat, Kristof (1996) recommends that researchers undertaking supplementary fit (i.e. congruence) studies make every attempt to use commensurate measures so that high levels of fit imply similarities between the two parties. In doing this, commensurate measures are more precise in their theoretical underpinnings by aligning research methods with the associated theory.

After making the case for a commensurate measure of individuals and organisations, O'Reilly et al (1991) had to find a suitable construct that could be used to describe both domains. They first considered personality, but rejected it because its use to describe organisations would lead to anthropomorphism. Such anthropomorphism would lead to a spurious description of the organisational environment that would confound the measurement of fit. The researchers also considered culture, but realised that a reverse problem would emerge. Whilst culture might be one of the most commonly used languages to capture the organisational environment, the application of it to individuals would be 'organomorphic' and cause a similar confound. Instead, they focused their attention on values, which offer a language that is common to both domains (Chatman, 1989, 1991; Rokeach, 1973). Values have been demonstrated to be a factor influencing individual behaviour (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Locke, 1975; McCoy, 1985; Rokeach, 1973; Stackman et al, 2000), and are 'fundamental and relatively enduring' (Chatman, 1991, p. 459). Moreover, values are often viewed as one of the base components of organisational cultures (Chatman, 1989). Schein (1993), for example, views values as deep socio-psychological drivers of organisational culture: 'A set of values that becomes embodied in an ideology or organisational philosophy ... can serve as a guide and as a way of dealing with the uncertainty of intrinsically uncontrollable or difficult events' (p. 20). For reasons such as these, the value congruence between individuals and

organisations has been the most widely research form of fit. As the goal of the present study is to extend existing studies – in particular, those of Cable and Judge (1997), Chatman (1991), and O'Reilly et al, (1991) – to different phases and processes in Schneider's ASA framework, it is natural to maintain as much in common with those studies so that meaningful comparisons might be made. Hence, there are compelling reasons for the adoption of values as the currency of fit in the present study.

The term 'values' has been used in two different ways in the literature (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). The first way is the value that someone places on an object or outcome. This is an instrumental relationship and the value is inherent in the object (Rokeach, 1973). The second way that the term 'value' is used is to describe a person and refers to the values that the person holds. These 'person' values are "a person's internalised belief about how he or she should or ought to behave" (Ravlin, 1995, p. 598). These 'person' values (from hereon simply termed 'values') have been subdivided into two types: terminal and instrumental by Rokeach (1973). A terminal value is one that is pursued for its own sake (e.g. being loved, comfort, and wisdom); i.e. it is about an end state that the individual thinks is worth pursuing. An instrumental value is a mode of behaviour, in particular, a mode of behaviour that facilitates the attainment of terminal values. Examples of this type of value would be honesty, openness, and respectfulness. These instrumental values are interesting in the context of examining P–O fit because they reside within, and have meaning for, the individual and yet are common to much of the language used to describe organisational cultures (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). The quote from Schein (1993) on the previous page, for example, describes the way that behavioural values depict culture.

P–O fit redefined for the present study

For the reasons outlined above, P–O fit is defined in this study as: *the congruence between individuals' and organisations' values*. This is a similar definition of P–O fit as used by Cable and Judge (1997). It also accords with the definitions of P–O fit used by Adkins et al (1994), Chatman (1991), and

O'Reilly et al (1991), which makes comparisons with these studies more meaningful.

P–P fit defined for the present study

In addition, this present study also requires a definition of P–P fit to take account of the research questions that emerge from Van Vianen's (2000) conceptualisation of this form of fit. Like P–O fit, P–P fit is concerned with the congruence of values. But unlike P–O fit, P–P fit is concerned with the value congruence between an individual and the values of a group of people, rather than between an individual and an organisation. Therefore, P–P fit is defined in this study as: *the congruence between an individual's values and the values of a group of individuals.*

Actual, perceived, indirect and direct forms of fit

In addition to producing an integrative definition of the term 'person–organisation fit', Kristof's review was useful in clarifying some of the other language in the P–O fit literature. Primarily these clarifications concern issues to do with the differing approaches that researchers have taken to investigate P–O fit. Two of these clarifications – *direct* versus *indirect* and *actual* versus *perceived* forms of P–O fit – are important to define as these terms are used in this and future chapters.

A direct measurement of P–O fit is a question that asks someone openly and explicitly how they, or someone he or she has observed, fits. For example, Cable and Judge (1995) asked job applicants how well they thought they would fit into each of the organisations they were applying to. They found that applicants' perceptions of their own fit were positively related to their rating of the attractiveness of organisations. This example illustrates the closely connected nature of direct and perceived fit. Direct fit is a method of surfacing a measure of fit, whereas perceived fit is a form of fit based on the perceptions of the person under scrutiny.

Direct measures of perceived P–O fit are useful when the researcher hypothesises that behaviour is driven from a generalised sense of fit (Kristof-

Brown, 1997). A 'generalised' sense of fit being one where the researcher holds the view that fit is either too complex or too 'unknowable' for respondents to describe the component influences on their fit. Despite their appropriateness in such situations, direct measures have received some harsh criticism due to their inherently confounding nature (e.g. Edwards, 1991). First, direct measures do not separate out the person and organisation variables. This means that it is not possible to assess the comparative influence of the person, the situation and the interaction in shaping behaviour (Edwards, 1991). Second, as these measures do not separate out the person and organisation variables, there is no way of knowing whether or not the respondents are conceptualising the two factors in a commensurate way. Third, there is a risk of a consistency bias when direct measures of P–O fit are used in conjunction with measures of other work-related attitudes (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). This means that when someone says that he or she fits well, the person is inclined follow with positive expressions of job satisfaction, organisational commitment or whatever other attitude is being studied.

In contrast to direct measures, indirect measures of P–O fit separate the individual and organisational sides of the fit. This makes it possible to measure the power of the person, the environment and the interaction in shaping behaviour independently. An example of an indirect measure is the Organizational Culture Profile (O'Reilly et al, 1991: OCP). This is a card sort that can be used to capture the values of the individual and the values of the organisation independently of each other. People's values can then be assessed against the organisation's values and a measure of fit calculated. This type of fit is called 'actual fit' because the index of fit is verifiable without recourse to the implicit judgements of the people involved (Kristof, 1996). For this reason, studies that seek to understand P–O fit processes from an interactional perspective (e.g. Cable & Judge, 1997; Chatman, 1991; Van Vianen, 2000), such as the present one, adopt an indirect approach to capture fit.

The CES

Researchers have used two different instruments to capture P–O fit in an indirect fashion: the Comparative Emphasis Scale (CES: Meglino, Ravlin

& Adkins, 1989; Ravlin & Meglino, 1987b) and the Organisational Culture Profile (OCP: Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991). Both of these are ipsative instruments and both capture work values. The CES captures data on four values: achievement, fairness, helping and concern for others, and honesty. It presents respondents with 24 pairs of values, which are phrased as behaviours, and asks them to choose the value in each pair that they feel should receive the greatest emphasis. As each value is compared to every other value four times, the researcher can simply add up a score for each value to create a score for each of the four values. If required, the prompts can change to capture the values of different bodies (e.g. someone's own values, someone's perceptions of an organisation's values).

The CES has received very little attention since the arrival of the OCP. This appears to be because the OCP contains a much greater number of values (54) than the CES (4) and is therefore a much more inclusive measure. Meglino et al (1989) acknowledge this limitation of the CES themselves and say that when the CES produces non-significant findings it might be due to P–O fit being unimportant or due to values not captured by the instrument. For this reason, this study adopts the OCP, which is reviewed below.

The OCP

The OCP was expressly developed to assess person–organisation fit in an indirect manner (O'Reilly et al., 1991) and it has been advocated as an appropriate measure of person–organisation fit in organisational entry settings (Chatman, 1991; Cable and Judge, 1996, 1997; Cable & Parsons, 2001; Judge & Cable, 1997; Kristof, 1996; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998; Schneider et al, 1995; Sheridan, 1992; Stackman et al, 2000; Van Vianen, 2000).

The OCP is a 54-item Q-sort. A Q-sort is a particular form of card sort in which the respondents sort the items into a pattern (usually a normal distribution to aid statistical analysis) according to their perceptions and the prompt. In the OCP, respondents are asked to sort the cards into a 2–4–6–9–12–9–6–4–2 distribution. Advocates of the method (e.g. Bem & Funder, 1978, Block, Block & Morrison, 1981; Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Chatman, 1989, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) argue that this distribution produces a template or

profile that matches respondents' own value structure. However, there is an important theoretical problem with this approach. By forcing people to place their responses in a normal distribution, there is an assumption that peoples' values are similarly distributed. This is not necessarily the case such as when values are deemed equally important to someone or equally irrelevant (Stackman et al, 2000). This matter is discussed at greater length later in the chapter. The effect of the enforced normal distribution of the categorical data (i.e. the value statements) by the OCP is to produce ordinal data that greatly limits the statistical analysis that can be conducted.

The 54 items in the OCP were produced after an extensive review of the organisational culture literature. An item was included if it "(1) could be used to describe any person or organisation, (2) would not be equally characteristic of all people or organisations, and (3) would be easy to understand" (O'Reilly et al., 1991, p. 495). These conditions produced an initial pool of 110 items. This pool was then filtered for generality, discriminability, readability and non-redundancy to produce the 54 items. The authors assert that the 54 items are "a comprehensive set of values that could be used to characterise both individuals and organisations" (O'Reilly et al., 1991, p. 495). The items that emerged are short value statements – predominantly instrumental values although some terminal values appear (Stackman et al, 2000) – that can be used to assess both the values of organisations and individuals. By correlating the profile of organisational values and individual values, a measure of person–organisation fit is arrived at. The 54 items are listed in Appendix 1.

There are about a dozen or so published studies using the OCP card sort. Most of these have been reviewed earlier and there seems little point in a further detailed review of the findings of these studies. Very briefly, the studies using the OCP card sort have consistently demonstrated that the form of P–O fit that it captures is moderately predictive of employees' (usually newcomers') turnover and related outcomes of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and citizenship behaviours (e.g. Chatman, 1991; Chatman & Jehn, 1994; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Sheridan, 1992). When researchers have wanted to study the behaviour of applicants using the OCP (e.g. Cable & Judge, 1996, 1997; Judge & Cable, 1997), practical problems associated with

card sorts have caused them to transform the actual sorting of cards to a paper and pencil sort of items.

Practical difficulties with the OCP

Before discussing some of the operational difficulties of the OCP, theoretical and statistical difficulties should be acknowledged. From a theoretical perspective, the use of an ipsative card sort implies that values are viewed as being ordered, which might not be the case. Moreover, the format of the OCP implies that values are normally distributed, which again might not be the case. These issues are discussed in much greater depth later in this chapter and in the next. From a statistical perspective, the OCP produces ordinal data. This limits analysis of this data to non-parametric methods, which greater reduces what can be done with the data.

Turning to the operational problems with the OCP, the first difficulty concerns the guidance the respondent needs to complete the task correctly. It is usual with card sorts for the researcher to be present (Block, 1978). Completing the task of sorting 54 cards into the forced normal distribution is quite an unusual challenge and consequently respondents usually have to ask questions to clarify the objective (Barber & Wesson, 1998). When the respondents are employees, it is possible for the researcher to visit the research site and attend the card sorting. Alternatively, the researcher can train organisational members to supervise the task. However, when there is a large sample size and when the respondents are geographically remote and widely spread, it becomes impractical for the researcher, or the researcher's representatives, to attend the card sorting. In addition to the difficulty with the instructions, there are considerable practical problems with the transport of the cards to the respondents and the gathering of the cards after they are sorted (Barber & Wesson, 1998). Both Kerlinger (1986) and Nunnally (1978) conclude that Q-sorts are impractical in situations of large samples with remote respondents. Studies of applicants tend to fall into this category. Consequently, when Cable and Judge (1996, 1997) decided to study the fit of applicants using the OCP, as this study does, they developed a paper and

pencil version of the OCP that replicated the ranking process of the Q-sort without the need to use cards.

As described earlier, Cable and Judge (1996, 1997) wanted to look at the congruence between the values of interviewees and interviewers to see if this predicted the interview outcome (which they found it did). To do this, they reduced the OCP to 40 items by excluding those items that appeared similar to ten organisational researchers (Cable and Judge, 1996). An important reason that led them to reduce the number of items in the OCP was that they found that ranking 54 items in order of preference was time-consuming and difficult for respondents to do with any precision (Cable and Judge, 1997). Respondents placed their ranking of the 40 items into a blank grid that forced the ranking into a normal distribution.

Although Cable and Judge's revised OCP appears to replicate O'Reilly et al's card sort without the operational difficulties associated with the cards, Cable and Judge have not offered any evidence to demonstrate that respondents use the same cognitive processes to sort the items. This omission drew the attention of Barber and Wesson (1998). They used concurrent verbal protocol analysis to compare a paper and pencil sort to the stated aims of a card sort and to a simple paper and pencil version of the OCP delivered on a Likert scale (i.e. a normative rating scale rather than an ipsative ranking scale). Concurrent verbal protocol analysis is a technique whereby the respondents speak aloud their thoughts as they carry out a task. It revealed several major problems with the paper and pencil OCP that mean that it cannot be recommended as a suitable tool for capturing P–O fit. The first of these problems concerns respondents' understanding of the items. Whilst most items were understood by respondents, several items stood out. The item 'autonomy' was not understood by 30% of the sample; 25% did not understand the term 'fitting in'; and 20% wrestled with the definition of the item 'emphasising a single culture throughout the organisation'.

The second problem with the paper and pencil OCP concerned guessing; i.e. respondents did not know the answer and had to guess the item's position in the ranking. The researchers found that 15.6% of responses were based on guessing and that this varied considerably by respondent. One person guessed on 23 of the 54 items. Overall, 25% of the participants guessed 31%

of the time. In most cases when respondents guessed, they tended to place the item in the middle of the distribution.

The third problem related to the procedure of the sort. Thirty percent of the participants doing the paper and pencil sort stopped during the protocol to ask for clarification of the process. None of the people tackling the Likert-scaled rating process had to do this. Other reported problems with the paper and pencil sort include frustrations with the amount of items to sort, frustrations with forced distribution, and frustrations with similarly worded items. An astonishing 70% of the participants tackling the sort expressed some discomfort with the forced choice nature of the format. None of the rating participants expressed any reservations about the format.

A fourth problem related to the paper and pencil sort. The researchers examined the physical instruments for evidence that items were moved about in the distribution. Usually when doing a card sort, respondents switch the order of items from one pile or location to another. This switching allows for comparison across the set and between all items and it gives confidence that the order that emerges has been thought about. Barber and Wesson (1998) found that in their study only 40% of participants made such changes in the paper and pencil sorted version of the OCP, which suggests that not much comparison of values was actually taking place. In reviewing the transcripts, however, the researchers did find some evidence that their ranking participants did make some comparisons between the items, although rather fewer than might be expected with a card sort. The people tackling the paper and pencil sort made, on average, 6.1 comparisons during the exercise. Interestingly though, the people tackling the Likert-scaled rating version also made comparisons between the items. In their case, they made, on average, 3.8 comparisons during the exercise. The authors concluded that their results do not support the expected ipsative–normative divide that sorts consistently evoke comparisons whereas ratings consistently evoke independent assessments. Instead, the researchers' view was that both the ranking and rating procedures did both, although independent assessment seemed to dominate in both versions.

The authors' conclusion contained some strong views on the appropriateness of the paper and pencil sort as a substitute to the card sort.

'These results lead us to conclude that the construct validity of the component parts of the OCP may be compromised by use of a paper and pencil Q-sort, and that the rating version presents far fewer concerns' (Barber & Wesson, 1998, p. 98). '[W]e believe that the behavioural consequences of the frustration experienced by the Q-sort participants are probably understated. Furthermore, it did appear that the more demanding Q-sort task generated substantially different thought processes than did the rating task. [... A] pencil and paper sorting approach has significant drawbacks and no significant advantages relative to a rating approach. We strongly encourage adoption of a rating format of the OCP when actual card sorts cannot be used' (Barber & Wesson, 1998, p. 99). However, despite this ringing endorsement of rating scales, it would be putting the methodological cart before the theoretical horse (Rokeach & Ball-Rokeach, 1989) to adopt this approach without suitable justification from the underlying theory.

Ipsative or normative measurement?

In their review of the values' literature, Meglino and Ravlin (1998) discuss the two schools of thought about how values are structured. The first of these schools of thought holds that an individual's values are hierarchically organised according to their salience to the individual. Locke (1991) illustrates this point of view thus, "Since a person can only take [...] one action at a time, a person who did not have any hierarchy of values would be paralysed by conflict and would be unable to act at all or to sustain an action once taken" (p. 291). Researchers who adopt this approach use ipsative profiles of values that place an individual's value in a rank order. This ipsative approach produces a relative assessment of values. It does not say anything about whether or not any of the values in the hierarchy are important to the individual. This is the approach adopted in the OCP.

The second school of thought holds that a person's values may be uniformly high or low and may be equal in intensity. In other words, many values might be important to individuals, other values might be unimportant, and some of the values might be equally important. With such an approach, normative methods may be used that capture values independently of each

other. Schwartz (1994) argues that values are inherently different (e.g. is it possible to order freedom, autonomy, tolerance, fairness, etc.?) and differently relevant in alternative situations (e.g. autonomy has a different meaning in work and home environments). As a result he uses a rating scale to capture values. Such an approach has many practical benefits such as measuring the strength of values, measuring the absolute differences between values (Osgood & Suci, 1952), making the comparison of values across individuals easier (Ng, 1982), allowing the use of more sophisticated statistical techniques (Hicks, 1970), and, not trivially, normative methods are usually much easier to administer and more convenient (Munson & McIntyre, 1979). However, despite these powerful benefits, the choice of method must depend on the researcher's view on how values are structured and on the phenomenon that is investigated (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). In addition to the argument of Schwartz (1994), there is other theoretical support for the view that values are independently held. For example, Seligman and Katz (1996) considered how values are held in different situations. They concluded that values are dynamic and depend on the situation the individual finds him or herself. In particular, they argue that people emphasise different values in different situations suggesting that values are independently held. Stackman et al (2000) reviewed the values literature and advocate a structure for values that is non-hierarchical. Instead, they posit that values are layered, like the skin of an onion, according to how explicitly the values are held. They argue that, "it is not meaningful that one value is more important than another in a rigid hierarchical sense; rather, it is probable that there is a set of core values for any individual that is more important – more deeply held – than another set of values" (Stackman et al, 2000, p. 46). Finally, Ravlin and Meglino (1987a, 1987b, Meglino & Ravlin, 1989), themselves advocates of a hierarchically structured view of values, found minimal evidence of their existence and suggest that the hierarchies are flexible when the values in question are of equal or nearly equal salience.

In summary, whilst most studies in the P–O fit domain have adopted the school of thought that an individual's values are hierarchically organised, recent developments in the values' literature suggest that values are more flexibly held and vary in strength from situation to situation. These arguments

suggest that values are held independently of each other. This is the approach adopted in this study. Following from this decision, normative assessment will be used to capture values.

Calculating fit

Few subjects in the P–O fit literature have attracted the attention that calculating fit has. After a decade of discussion, there is no clear answer as to the most appropriate way to calculate fit. The controversy arose with the emergence of the OCP. The OCP calculates fit between people and organisations by correlating the profile of values between the two parties. This method of calculation only informs researchers about the similarity of the profiles; it reveals nothing about the strength of fit, the comparative influence of person and environment factors, or the direction of fit (Edwards, 1993, 1994). Being an ipsative scale, any alternatives would suffer similar problems given that the raw data is a ranking of items rather than a rating.

The adoption of a normative approach permits the use of measures of fit that address many of the concerns mentioned above. The most common way to calculate fit with normative scales is using a difference scale. A difference scale simply deducts one number from another to supply a measure of fit or congruence. When there are multiple items, these differences are added together. There are many different ways in which these calculations can be done. The sum of differences just mentioned is termed an algebraic addition. Other variations that have been employed include a sum of absolute differences, a sum of squared differences, a sum of Euclidean distances (all of which ignore the direction of the difference between the person and organisation variables), and a correlation between the two profiles of ratings (Edwards, 1993; Edwards & Parry, 1993; Kristof, 1996).

Difference scores have their critics (e.g. Edwards, 1993; Nunnally, 1978). Edwards (1993, 1994) argues that there is conceptual ambiguity inherent to difference scores because they hide the relative contributions of the person and the organisation to the overall score. However, although information on the level of the person and organisation variables is lost, difference scores do produce information on the size of the congruence.

Edwards is also concerned that squared, absolute and Euclidean difference scores ignore the direction of difference. However, whilst these are important concerns, they are largely irrelevant when the researcher's interest is in the degree of fit. In such situations, the researcher wants to measure the congruence of people and organisations. The comparative importance of the strength of the person and organisation variables are of secondary interest to the measure of fit, and the direction of fit is irrelevant because it is the degree of fit, rather than particular types of fit, that is of theoretical interest.

Edwards' (1993, 1994) suggested alternative to difference scores is polynomial regression. This method examines the relationship between the two entities (person and organisation) and the outcome and depicts it with three-dimensional response surfaces. Edwards (1993) argues that such an approach lends credibility to the proposed model. This is the approach to calculating fit successfully used by Van Vianen (2000). However, this method also has it drawbacks. The first of these drawbacks is theoretical. Edwards' technique separates the component parts of the fit to calculate fit. Tisak and Smith (1994a, 1994b) argue that this approach conceptualises the fit between people and organisations differently to difference scores. With difference scores, they argue, someone's score on a particular item is directly compared to the equivalent environmental item. They argue that it is the degree of fit between these dyads that most directly influence the individual's behaviour, not a global comparison of person and organisation variables, which is how Edwards' method works. On a practical level, Edwards' method creates issues with sample size. The method he advocates assumes that there are equal numbers of organisational and individual respondents. When this is not the case, the method overemphasises significance levels since the number of organisations, or raters of organisations, is usually considerably less than the degrees of freedom attributed to organisational variables. This is a problem in many P–O fit studies (e.g. Chatman, 1991), such as this one, where there are a relatively small number of organisations. Consequently, for both theoretical and practical reasons, Edwards' suggestion of polynomial regression is not appropriate for this study.

As mentioned above, there are several different types of difference score to choose from. The choice should be driven from how fit is

conceptualised in this study. As Schneider's ASA framework focuses on congruence and does not make any propositions about the direction of fit, it seems appropriate to calculate fit disregarding the direction of fit. The simplest way of calculating this form of fit is summing the absolute differences between each of the person and organisation (or people) variables. Hence, in the present study P–O fit (and P–P fit) will be calculated using a sum of absolute differences approach.

Summary

This chapter has considered many of the methodological issues confronting the researcher who wants to examine the P–O and P–P fit of applicants. It began by defining P–O and P–P fit for the present study. This discussion showed that Schneider's conceptualisation of P–O fit is in supplementary terms and that values are an appropriate currency to explore effects during the attraction and selection phases of the ASA cycle.

The discussion moved on to consider whether direct or indirect methods should be used to capture P–O and P–P fit. So that interaction effects might be examined, indirect methods were chosen for the present study. There are two such methods in the literature; the CES and the OCP. As the OCP is a more comprehensive instrument and because previous studies have adopted it, it appears the most appropriate tool for the present study. However, there are problems using the OCP on geographically dispersed and remote participants due to its card sort format. A review of the other researchers' efforts to produce a paper and pencil version of the OCP led to the decision to use a normative form of the OCP using a Likert scale, which is both practical and justified with P–O fit theory as the strength of values is thought relevant in the present study. Finally, different methods of calculating fit were discussed. A sum of absolute differences approach was chosen because it is neither practical nor appropriate to use polynomial regression and because the direction of fit is not a concern in the present study.

CHAPTER 8

CONSTRUCT VALIDATION

Construct validation is the process of checking that a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Unfortunately there is no single test or statistic that can be used to ascertain an instrument's construct validity. Instead, Nunnally (1978) and Cronbach (1990) advise researchers to treat each instrument as a separate entity and examine its construct validity in the manner best suited to it.

There has been only one study of the OCP's construct validity. Barber and Wesson's (1998) focus of interest was on a paper and pencil version of the instrument, but their findings relate to other versions. The findings of this study were discussed in detail in the previous chapter when limitations of the OCP were examined. Their findings included concerns about respondents not understanding all of the items in the OCP and worries about the format, both of which highlight construct validity problems with the OCP.

In addition, this pilot study looks at the use of an OCP-derived instrument in a British context. As there appear to be no published accounts of the OCP being used with British respondents, the British context adds an additional unknown that needs to be investigated.

Method

The first stage of the development of an OCP questionnaire for use in a British context was to explore whether the items included in the OCP were comprehensible to people in the UK. Fifty people (academics and non-academics) who were working in the Open University Business School were circulated with a copy of the OCP items (see Appendix 1 for the set of items).

They were asked to review the 54 items in the original OCP (O'Reilly et al, 1991) in response to four questions:

1. Do you easily understand what the item means?
2. Is the item redundant or irrelevant?
3. Is the item practically the same as another item in the list?
4. Does the list omit any important descriptors of an organisation's culture?

Participants were allowed to respond anonymously. Forty-two replies were received (84% response rate).

Results

The greatest concern of respondents was a widespread feeling that the OCP items were so vague that they were difficult to relate to an individual or organisation, and that the vagueness bred uncertainty. For example, take the term "flexibility". Does it mean that (1) individuals are flexible? (2) cultures are flexible? (3) managers are flexible? (4) staff are flexible? (5) values are flexible? or something else such as managerial rhetoric for "exploitation"? (Sisson, 1994). The original authors deliberately designed the OCP in this way so that individuals and organisations (or the people inside organisations asked to comment on the culture) were not constrained and could describe the environment according to their own constructs. In addition, expressing values in conceptual terms allows values to be compared across situations. Unfortunately, these respondents found that the conceptual phrasing of values simply made the tool confusing and very difficult to comprehend.

Unlike Barber and Wesson (1998) the respondents did not find any of the items incomprehensible. However, given the university setting of the participants, it might be expected that they would be highly literate and also unwilling to admit weaknesses in this regard.

Contrary to Cable and Judge (1996), the respondents did not find that any of the items were too similar or redundant, but four descriptors were highlighted as being absent from the list of items: gender, race, sexual orientation, and the external community. These omissions are reminiscent of

Lovelace and Rosen's (1996) findings. They published results of a critical incident analysis of organisational practices leading to person–organisation fit and a comparison of their findings with the items in the OCP. They suggest that the OCP omits two categories of factors that are seen as important by employees in affecting their fit with their employer. These two factors are (1) the way the organisation handled ethical considerations, and, (2) the way in which the company handled issues related to women and minorities, both of which echo the items surfaced by the present participants.

Item development

Resolving the issue of the appropriate phrasing of values is not isolated to the OCP. Schwartz (1992), for example, has categorised values at a conceptual or universal level extending the work of Rokeach (1973). Although his focus is on universal values, he acknowledges that these are too abstract to be used at the operational level (i.e. in questionnaires, card sorts etc.). In a later paper (Schwartz, 1994), he argues that values should be expressed in terms relating to behaviours suited to the specific environment in which the research instrument is being used. This is important, he argues, because not all universal values are suited to every situation and phrasing them in context-specific terms improves construct validity. Schwab (1980), who also conceptualised values at the conceptual and operational levels, supports this view.

Stackman et al (2000) extend the work of Schwartz (1992, 1994) and Schwab (1980) by suggesting that the benefit of being able to generalise abstract values across situations might be more apparent than real. They consider the value 'freedom'. In a work environment such a value may be highly salient when it refers to the imposition of directive rules by managers. But in a family situation, the value has very different connotations and salience. For them, therefore, the notion of generalising values across different situations is spurious, as values will always be specific to the location. As a result, these researchers also suggest phrasing values in terms of behaviours relevant to the specific situation to improve relevance for respondents.

Such an approach accords with Schneider's conceptualisation of the ASA framework. As described in Chapter 2, this cycle offers an explanation of the behaviour of organisations by positing an explanation of individual behaviour of employees and job seekers. It is a framework grounded in social psychology and the behaviour of people. Given this focus, it seems appropriate to phrase values in behavioural terms that are relevant to the environments under study.

For the reasons outlined above, it was decided to rephrase the abstract items in the OCP as observable behaviours in organisations. In Rokeach's (1973) terms, they are reconstructed in the form of instrumental values (specific modes of conduct), rather than in the form of terminal values (end-states of existence). For example, "flexibility" was changed to "people are flexible in their approach to work" and "tolerance" was changed to "people tolerate the mistakes of others". The values underpinning each of the reworked items are still transparent, but by expressing them in terms of the behaviour of individuals in organisations (or modes of conduct), respondents were more easily able to associate with them making completion of the task simpler and more likely to yield meaningful outcomes. In addition, the terms were phrased in language that was as neutral as possible to minimise any bias due to social desirability (O'Reilly et al, 1991; Ravlin & Meglino, 1989).

In reworking the items, it was possible to produce many different items relating to each original item in the OCP. In fact, the number of reworked items was limited only by the researcher's imagination. In choosing a selection to be tested in subsequent pilot studies, those items that seemed the most direct operationalisation of the original OCP item were chosen. An additional factor that influenced the selection was the desire to produce a varied set of items to make completion of the new measure less repetitive. But the fact that each original OCP item could be reworked in so many different ways, coupled with the values that the respondents surfaced, demonstrates that both the original OCP and the reworked OCP only provides an indication of someone's fit rather than an absolute measure of their fit.

As a result of the respondents' comments regarding missing aspects of culture, the following items were added to the set:

"there is an even mix of male and female managers in the company",

"there is an even mix of racial groups in the organisation",
"employees openly display their sexual orientation freely", and,
"the composition of the work force is typical of the community".

These additional items produced a set of 58 values rephrased as typical behaviours found in organisations.

Normative scale

The plusses and minuses of normative and ipsative measurement were discussed in the previous chapter. The conclusion of that discussion was a decision to adopt a normative scale for the present study. Such a scale was chosen for three reasons. First, it accords with a model of values in which values can be equal in strength (Schwartz, 1992, 1994). Second, a normative scale allows for the capture of the strength of values, which is important because previous studies have demonstrated the importance of the salience of values to individuals (e.g. Sheridan, 1992; Turban & Keon, 1993). Third, there are considerable practical benefits with using a normative rating scale rather than a ranking scale with a large and dispersed set of participants. Furthermore, Barber and Wesson (1998) raised considerable concerns about the validity of a ranking scale for a paper and pencil version OCP and advised researchers to adopt a rating scale.

The questionnaire used in these small-scale pilot studies reported in this chapter used a questionnaire that fitted on two sides of a single piece of paper. Initially, a nine point Likert scale was used with the middle point being "neutral". This was chosen to match the nine piles that respondents to the original OCP are asked to sort the cards into.

To trial this rating version of the OCP in a British context, fifteen managers studying part-time for an MBA through distance learning were asked to complete two versions of the new instrument. Eight of the participants completed a version in which the prompt asked them to rate the values thus: "*How characteristic of your organisation's culture are the following items?*" The remaining seven managers were given a version with the following prompt: "*How desirable is it for each of the following items to*

be a part of the organisation you work for?" The prompts are very similar to those used by O'Reilly et al (1991).

The managers reported no difficulty in understanding the questions, the items, or the instructions. However, two problems emerged. First, a nine-point scale, rather than increasing discrimination, was felt to be confusing. Second, it was found that most participants rated most of the items in the 9-8-7-6 graduations of the scale. As this would be compounded if a seven-point Likert scales was adopted, it was decided that an off-centre neutral, in position 3, would be employed.

A slightly different anchored rating scale was used for each prompt. Anchored rating scales confer the benefit of allowing the strengths of participants' responses to be gauged and compared with more confidence than if such a scale was not present (Cronbach, 1990). Drawing on the work of O'Reilly et al (1991), the following scale was used in response to the question "how characteristic of your organisation are the following items?":

(7) *"a defining characteristic"*

(6) *"very characteristic"*

(5) *"characteristic"*

(4) *"sometimes found"*

(3) *"neutral"*

(2) *"uncharacteristic"*

(1) *"very uncharacteristic"*

In response to the question, "how desirable is it for each of the following items to be a part of the organisation you work for?", the following scale was used:

(7) *"essential"*

(6) *"important"*

(5) *"very desirable"*

(4) *"desirable"*

(3) *"neutral"*

(2) *"undesirable"*

(1) *"very undesirable"*

The revised questionnaire was tested in a trial with 64 employees in an engineering company. The participants in the study worked in two sites – one in London and one in New York – and in half a dozen different departments. This design allows an investigation of the new instrument's ability to capture fit (both P–O fit and P–P fit) at different levels of the organisation. However, a full discussion of these aspects of this pilot study is postponed until Chapter 11 so that findings from the other pilot studies might be used in the analysis of this data. At this point in the thesis it is appropriate to describe how these 64 people responded to the individual items as these responses influenced the wording of the items for future pilot studies.

Difficulty with the four new items was experienced at the very outset of this study. The Human Resources Manager who could grant access to the engineering firm reviewed the proposed questionnaire and specifically singled out the four new items even though they were randomly distributed in the set of 58 items. The manager was assured that the identity of his organisation would be kept confidential and that the items emerged from a previous academic study. With these assurances, he granted access.

In reviewing the completed questionnaires, it was noted that six of the 64 participants annotated their questionnaires in such a way as to suggest that these items were irritating or annoying. There might be many reasons why these items were thought unsuitable (e.g. poor wording, individuals' sensitivities). But for practical reasons associated with not upsetting people who control access and because participants found the items awkward, these items were dropped from the set and, in Chapter 11, they have been ignored to make analysis easier.

In addition to the problems with these four items, participants indicated problems (by annotating their questionnaire in some way) with five other items. These five items were changed. These changes are displayed in Table 8.1 below.

Table 8.1 The rewordings of the five items

OCP Item	Previous Item	Reworded Item
Being rule oriented	Staff are constrained by rules	People pay attention to rules
Sharing information freely	Information is freely shared within the organisation	People share information freely
Emphasising a single culture throughout the organisation	Everyone adopts similar behaviour	Staff behave similarly in all parts of the organisation
Informality	Working relationships between people are informal	There is an informality between people at work
Having a clear guiding philosophy	The organisation has a clear guiding philosophy	Staff act in accordance with the organisation's guiding philosophy

Six organisational researchers were asked to assess whether the revised 54 items represented the OCP item in an instrumental value form. The six researchers agreed that the revised set was suitable. This final set of reworked items can be found in Appendix 2. Finally, a follow-up study was conducted with a different group of eleven managers who were also studying for their MBAs. The revised questionnaire contained the seven-point scale, the off-centre neutral, and the fully anchored rating scale. The participants found the questionnaire straightforward and easy to complete and they reported no new problems. This final set of 54 items was used in the large-scale test of the new instrument (see Chapter 9).

Summary

This chapter explored the construct validity of a paper and pencil version of the OCP for use in the United Kingdom. The key change over the existing versions of the OCP (other than adopting a normative rather than an ipsative scale) was the rewording of items. The original OCP items are constructed at the conceptual level. Respondents found these difficult to understand and to relate to themselves and their environments. Following the suggestions of Schwartz (1992, 1994), Schwab (1980), and Stackman et al (2000) the OCP items were recast as instrumental values (Rokeach, 1973). In other words, they were rewritten as behaviours found in organisations. The items and the questionnaire format were then tested in small-scale studies to

produce a working questionnaire that could be tested and refined in larger-scale pilot studies (see Chapters 9, 10 and 11).

CHAPTER 9

FACTOR STRUCTURE

The original OCP card sort contains a number of factors. O'Reilly et al (1991) found eight factors each of which contained at least three items: innovation, attention to detail, outcome orientation, aggressiveness, supportiveness, emphasis on rewards, team orientation, and decisiveness. Sheridan (1992) found seven factors: detail, stability, innovation, team orientation, respect for people, outcome, and aggressiveness. These two sets of factors are broadly similar, which suggests that the items in the original OCP were perceived similarly in the two separate sets of respondents. If a study of the factors in the revised OCP produced a similar structure, it would demonstrate that the rewording of items and reworking of the format has not substantially altered the function of instrument. In addition, as there are a large number of variables in the revised instrument – 54 – and a predicted seven or eight sub-factors from O'Reilly et al (1991) and Sheridan (1992), there might be items that can be removed without significant loss of information on respondents' P–O fit.

A factor analysis requires a large sample size. Other than surfacing the factors within the revised instrument, there are three other advantages conferred by a large-scale test of the instrument. First, it should surface any problem areas with the questionnaire and help make it robust. Do the participants understand the commands, the items, and the scale? Are they able to make sense of the tasks of capturing their own values and the values of their employer? Second, Meglino & Ravlin (1998) are concerned that normative measures of values are inherently flawed because of the socially desirable nature of values. They fear that rating scales will not be able to distinguish adequately between participants' values because respondents' scores will all be located at the positive end of the scale. As mentioned in the previous

chapter, the items for the normative OCP were phrased in as neutral a way as possible and in the early development of the revised instrument there was no sign of the problem that Meglino and Ravlin (1998) are concerned about. That said, a large-scale examination of the new measure affords the opportunity for the social desirability issue to be explored properly. Third, by including a few measures of outcomes that the original OCP has previously predicted, such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction and intent to leave, a large-scale survey can provide some indication of whether the revised instrument is doing the job it is meant to do.

Method

The large sample size required to investigate the factor structure of the revised OCP came from managers attending the residential school component of their distance-taught certificate level management courses with the Open University Business School in the United Kingdom. Questionnaires were distributed to approximately 1,900 students. 1,196 were completed and returned: a response rate of approximately 63%. Of these, 1,004 questionnaires (approximately 53% of the total distributed) could be used once they were filtered for incorrect completion, non-managers, those employed less than six months with their current employer, and those not in full-time employment. The calculation of the response rate is approximate because the distribution of the questionnaires was through multiple third parties.

The mean age of respondents was 36.3 years (standard deviation = 7.1), 61.2% were men and 38.8% were women (which corresponds to the male/female split of the student body), and the average tenure with their current employer was 9.5 years (standard deviation = 6.9). Completion of the questionnaires was optional and respondents were assured of complete anonymity. The respondents were asked to complete both parts of the revised OCP: an assessment of their organisation's values and their own personal values.

The questionnaire contained four sections. The first section asked respondents to describe their organisations' cultures using the 54 reworded values on a rating scale, as described in the previous chapter. The second

section asked respondents to do the same thing, but the prompt referred to how desirable each of the 54 values is to themselves. The third section contained some standard measures of constructs that P–O fit has been related to in previous studies. These were included because, despite problems with the cross-sectional nature of survey and concerns with common-method variance (e.g. people will rate the organisational values as similar to their own if they find them desirable), if the revised instrument is capturing P–O fit reasonably accurately, it would be expected to yield a similar pattern of associations to the constructs as previous studies of P–O fit have done. The scales included in section three were intent to leave (4 items), organisational commitment (Allen and Meyer's (1990) 24 item (3 x 8) affective, continuance and normative commitment scales), job satisfaction (4 items), and direct measures of P–O fit ("*My own values match or 'fit' with the values of my organisation*") and P–P fit ("*My values match those of other employees in the organisation*") were taken from Cable and Judge (1996), as was a direct measure of P–J fit (3 items). These scales were scored on seven-point Likert scales with the extremes being 'agree strongly' and 'disagree strongly'. The means, standard deviations, correlations and reliabilities are displayed in Table 9.6 later in the chapter. The fourth section asked respondents for some biographical details: gender, age, and length of time with current employer. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 3.

Results

A glance at the correlation matrix of the items in both the individual and organisational sections of the revised OCP indicated that most of the items exhibit correlations with the other items. To discover whether there were any meaningful groupings of items in the data, two factor analyses were carried out using principal components analysis with varimax rotation: one for respondents' assessment of the values of the organisation they work in, and another for their own values. Principal components analysis was chosen because it makes fewer assumptions about shape of the data than exploratory factor analysis and so is easier to apply. Varimax rotation was chosen because

independent dimensions were sought. These are the same tests used by O'Reilly et al (1991).

Two tests were conducted to see whether or not the data was suitable for factor analysis. A Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin test measures whether the distribution of values is adequate for conducting a factor analysis. A measure greater than .9 is generally thought of as excellent and above .8 as good (George & Mallery, 1995). In these sets of data the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin statistic for assessments of organisational values was .928 and for assessments of individual values was .894. Bartlett's test of sphericity is a measure of the multivariate normality of a set of distributions (George & Mallery, 1995). A significant value of less than .05 is required to satisfy the test (George & Mallery, 1995). In both of these data sets, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at less than .001. These two tests demonstrate that the two data sets are suitable for factor analysis.

In the case of respondents' own values, the factor analysis of all 54 items revealed ten interpretable factors with eigen values greater than 1.0, which shows that the factor explains more variance than any single item in the whole set. These ten factors were all defined by at least three items with factor loadings above .40 (see Table 9.1). In the case of assessments of organisational values, the factor analysis of all 54 items revealed eight interpretable factors with eigen values greater than 1.0 and defined by at least three items with factor loadings above .40 (see Table 9.2). Factor loadings greater than .40 are reported in bold type.

Table 9.1 Results of Factor Analysis of Assessments of Individual Values (n = 1004)

Revised OCP – Individual Values	Factor 1 People orientation	Factor 2 Personal initiative	Factor 3 Attention to detail	Factor 4 Demands made of staff	Factor 5 Competitiveness	Factor 6 Collegiality	Factor 7 Dispassionateness	Factor 8 Corporate image	Factor 9 Team focus	Factor 10 Decisiveness
People have a respect for the rights of others	72	15	2	-1	-5	7	10	12	2	12
Managers are concerned that people are treated well	70	9	6	-13	9	11	12	6	7	-1
Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	70	-3	3	6	5	1	9	4	9	6
Employees are given praise for good performance	54	19	19	-26	25	8	11	8	8	6
There are opportunities for growth and development	48	32	13	-24	23	17	4	9	-2	12
Employees are supportive of each other	46	18	9	1	-14	37	0	18	14	24
People share information freely	45	21	19	-12	-5	18	-9	9	14	17
People are aggressive	-45	3	-8	23	26	9	-11	7	-13	24
Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	16	63	8	7	13	12	-11	10	5	-1
People act on their own initiative	9	62	13	21	5	5	12	1	0	31
Staff are continually being innovative	11	60	9	-1	12	-13	2	6	37	-5
Employees take risks	-8	59	-20	5	11	10	-14	1	3	12
Staff have a lot of autonomy	29	51	-12	9	12	-4	13	-10	8	17
People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	9	51	2	7	22	-18	-4	9	36	20
Employees reflect on their actions	34	36	32	1	-11	-1	5	21	-3	30
Employees have a lot of enthusiasm for their work	34	36	26	0	23	20	-2	11	8	2
Staff are precise	2	4	75	7	-2	6	14	7	3	15
Staff pay attention to detail	7	-7	69	7	1	12	9	6	10	-1
Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	6	-7	60	0	16	22	29	13	6	6

Staff are expected to perform to a high standard	13	21	54	22	9	13	-18	19	16	11
People make quality a priority	25	7	47	-3	16	-3	-8	31	15	-13
People pay attention to rules	16	-38	40	21	-8	-5	35	20	16	16
Employees are very busy at work	4	16	18	67	7	0	8	9	-3	10
Staff have considerable demands made of them	-5	12	11	67	9	6	-20	1	0	6
People work long hours	-29	4	-5	63	3	11	1	8	-1	-2
People are constrained by many rules	-18	-36	23	43	-17	1	22	11	2	10
Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance.	21	26	7	-12	71	9	10	-2	0	-4
People focus on profits	-14	16	-5	6	67	9	0	29	3	0
People are judged by their level of achievement	29	1	9	10	62	7	-20	-12	7	17
People are competitive	-15	13	9	19	61	7	8	25	3	10
People develop friendships at work	8	0	6	7	9	73	15	-4	-1	13
People try to fit in	6	-11	20	14	6	67	24	14	11	0
People work in collaboration with others	21	14	22	-7	-7	56	-7	10	26	8
There is an informality between people at work	31	31	-8	32	8	34	12	-4	1	-18
Employees have security of employment	19	-2	6	-17	7	10	62	6	-1	13
Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	20	-2	6	-17	6	10	61	7	-2	13
People are easy going	9	25	0	12	5	34	55	-17	-8	-10
People are calm	17	-7	26	-3	-11	17	54	13	2	10
Employees are cautious	-8	-38	25	32	-2	-3	41	-2	9	-3
There is a low level of conflict	23	-8	15	-10	5	8	34	-1	16	-5
The company is distinctive and/or different to others	-4	5	8	5	13	9	-5	70	1	3
The organisation has a good reputation	25	9	21	4	6	5	7	63	4	-7
Staff act in accordance with the org's guiding philosophy	22	7	20	10	7	-6	10	54	15	21
Staff behave similarly in all parts of the organisation	18	-13	-5	22	10	24	17	38	5	26
People work in teams	7	2	10	-6	-1	18	-1	2	73	2
People are flexible in their approach to work	10	27	12	6	0	-2	-8	6	64	1
Employees can predict how others will react	6	2	5	-1	7	10	22	7	58	11
People are decisive	1	31	23	3	9	15	7	18	8	61
Employees confront conflict directly	19	17	-6	3	6	13	13	3	-1	56
Staff are held responsible for their own actions	18	3	24	16	13	-4	-14	-15	30	49

Remaining items that loaded on factors that were defined by less than three items with loadings greater than 40										
Staff are analytical	13	23	39	4	3	-1	-3	-1	4	0
Employees make socially responsible decisions	33	14	8	6	-10	12	14	12	6	15
People tolerate the mistakes of others	21	26	-24	0	1	25	5	20	-3	-1
Staff are continually having to change jobs or duties	-10	12	-6	33	5	1	3	5	12	1
Staff occupy jobs that do not change very much	-26	-13	7	9	-4	6	22	11	-2	9
Eigen values	8.52	4.20	3.47	2.20	1.95	1.62	1.42	1.34	1.21	1.15
Proportion of variance accounted for	16	8	6	4	4	3	3	3	2	2

Table 9.2 Results of Factor Analysis of Assessments of Organisational Values (n = 1004)

Revised OCP – Organisational Values	**Factor 1 Personal Initiative**	**Factor 2 People orientation**	**Factor 3 Attention to detail**	**Factor 4 Tolerance**	**Factor 5 Demands made of staff**	**Factor 6 Collegiality**	**Factor 7 Competitiveness**	**Factor 8 Bureaucraticness**
People act on their own initiative	69	15	15	20	29	4	1	-15
Employees take risks	66	4	-14	5	5	0	8	-13
People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	63	16	8	4	7	4	17	0
People are decisive	60	14	25	5	15	9	13	-8
Staff are continually being innovative	60	19	21	10	8	6	14	-21
Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	59	9	12	14	11	0	8	-20
Staff have a lot of autonomy	57	33	7	15	13	4	2	-17
Employees reflect on their actions	53	11	39	21	9	3	-10	4

Employees confront conflict directly	51	16	-11	-15	-4	18	-10	12
Staff are held responsible for their own actions	47	16	12	-19	24	12	10	22
Employees have a lot of enthusiasm for their work	40	30	25	26	24	8	10	-22
People are flexible in their approach to work	40	12	13	19	15	14	13	-26
Managers are concerned that people are treated well	14	72	11	28	2	5	0	-1
Employees are given praise for good performance	23	67	13	11	-3	14	13	-12
Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	17	58	9	38	6	-1	-11	14
People have a respect for the rights of others	18	53	21	39	14	8	-17	1
People are judged by their level of achievement	25	49	11	-7	20	11	33	5
There are opportunities for growth and development	33	49	12	1	-5	25	17	-7
People share information freely	28	40	23	23	4	18	-16	-31
Staff act in accordance with the org's guiding philosophy	5	26	16	12	19	-1	12	11
Staff are precise	12	6	78	10	10	7	-1	1
Staff pay attention to detail	4	14	75	1	6	7	-2	9
Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	11	9	66	8	4	17	10	14
People make quality a priority	14	28	57	9	13	6	6	-6
Staff are analytical	41	-4	43	17	1	3	19	-2
People tolerate the mistakes of others	12	15	-8	65	-15	15	5	-3
There is a low level of conflict	7	17	14	54	2	-4	16	-11
People are aggressive	8	-24	-20	-54	2	3	19	20
People are easy going	14	4	5	54	-7	34	-4	-7
People are calm	13	10	30	52	-24	18	-5	16
Employees make socially responsible decisions	27	18	11	43	10	9	-25	23
Staff have considerable demands made of them	16	-2	4	-8	76	11	-4	9
Employees are very busy at work	17	15	17	0	75	9	3	-7
People work long hours	13	-7	-6	-7	65	-2	17	-7
Staff are expected to perform to a high standard	17	14	33	-10	52	19	20	3
People develop friendships at work	-4	5	8	10	10	81	5	3
People try to fit in	3	5	8	18	8	69	8	20
People work in collaboration with others	32	21	26	11	10	57	-13	-6
Employees are supportive of each other	23	22	23	30	31	40	-13	-17
People work in teams	28	29	27	-9	5	38	-10	-10

People focus on profits	4	-4	0	4	10	-4	76	-11
People are competitive	32	5	8	-14	14	6	65	10
Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	20	33	6	-6	-2	1	59	-16
Employees are cautious	-27	-5	5	4	-2	4	4	61
People are constrained by many rules	-24	-18	12	-15	2	10	-21	60
People pay attention to rules	-12	26	39	10	1	11	-11	56
Remaining items that loaded on factors that were defined by less than three items with loadings greater than 40								
Staff occupy jobs that do not change much	-16	-8	0	5	-17	0	3	14
Staff are continually having to change jobs or duties	15	-9	-10	-13	11	6	9	16
Employees have security of employment	15	25	7	7	-24	17	-12	7
The company is distinctive and/or different to others	12	13	14	-9	14	13	-4	-1
The organisation has a good reputation	12	13	14	-9	14	13	-4	-1
Staff behave similarly in all parts of the organisation	19	34	29	19	7	9	20	-14
There is an informality between people at work	13	17	2	27	21	30	4	-34
Employees can predict how others will react	8	7	16	-2	-2	12	2	5
Eigen values	11.35	4.06	2.90	1.98	1.74	1.61	1.46	1.33
Proportion of variance accounted for	21	8	5	4	3	3	3	3

When the two factor analysis tables are considered side-by-side, six of the factors are common to both (see Table 9.3). This pattern shows that an organisation's values and employee's personal value preferences can be characterised by personal initiative (factor 1), people orientation (factor 2), attention to detail (factor 3), the demands made of staff (factor 4), collegiality (factor 5) and competitiveness (factor 6). These six factors are orthogonal. Although they fail to record a complete range of person–organisation fit categories, these six factors are useful as they permit the use of scales common to both the person and the organisation domains to record data thereby satisfying Chatman's (1989) commensurate condition. In addition, these six factors correspond to the factors surfaced by O'Reilly et al (1991) and Sheridan (1992).

Barber and Wesson's (1998) analysis of the OCP's construct validity suggested that some of the wordings of the items (e.g. autonomy) were not fully understood by all respondents. To check to see whether this was the case for these reworded items, missing values were investigated. It was assumed that any item that exhibited a significantly different number of missing values to other items might have a difficult or unclear wording. Although this is not a direct test of the suitableness of the items, it does provide some related information. For organisational values, the mean number of missing values per item was 3.04 (n=1014; SD = 1.85; max = 9, min = 1). To investigate whether or not any of the items differed significantly from this mean, the number of missing values for each item was keyed into a new variable and a one sample t-test run for each value. Only one item, '*people are competitive*', with nine respondents not supplying a score, differed significantly from this ($t = -15.75$, $p > .001$, $df = 23$). For individual values, the mean number of missing values per item was 10.30 (n=1014; SD = 2.84; max = 15, min = 5), with no items differing significantly from the mean. The item '*people are competitive*' did not significantly differ from the mean. When the missing values for both types of assessments (organisational and individual) are combined, no item differed significantly from the mean and no item received more than 1% of missing values. Hence, all twenty-four items included in the six factors are used in the following analyses.

Table 9.3 *Factor loadings of items common to both individual and organisational values*

	Organisational Values	Individual Values
Personal initiative		
People act on their own initiative	.69	.62
Employees take risks	.66	.59
People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	.63	.51
Staff are continually being innovative	.60	.60
Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	.59	.62
Staff have a lot of autonomy	.58	.52
People orientation		
Managers are concerned that people are treated well	.72	.70
Employees are given praise for good performance	.67	.55
Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	.58	.69
People have a respect for the rights of others	.55	.72
There are opportunities for growth and development	.49	.49
Attention to detail		
Staff are precise	.78	.75
Staff pay attention to detail	.75	.69
Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	.66	.66
People make quality a priority	.57	.46
Demands made of staff		
Staff have considerable demands made of them	.76	.67
Employees are very busy at work	.75	.67
People work long hours	.65	.63
Collegiality		
People develop friendships at work	.81	.73
People try to fit in	.69	.67
People work in collaboration with others	.57	.56
Competitiveness		
People focus on profits	.76	.67
People are competitive	.64	.61
Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	.59	.71

One of the most frequently heard arguments against the use of normative scales for the collection of data on values is their inherently positive nature (e.g. Chatman, 1989, 1991; Kristof, 1996; Ravlin & Meglino, 1987a, 1998; Meglino et al, 1989; O'Reilly et al, 1991). These researchers fear that when normative scales are used skewing towards the positive end of the scale will be exhibited. Earlier it was argued that the strength of values is an important factor in the decision to capture values using a normative scale. It was also suggested that values might not be as universally positive as these researchers have suggested. But if they are right and values are inherently

positive, then the use of a normative scale would indeed be prohibited as it would not be able to discriminate between peoples' values. The next test, therefore, examined the distribution of peoples' responses to the factors and items in the questionnaire.

First, the arithmetic mean score for responses on each of the factors was calculated. The mean was used to make comparisons between the factors easier to interpret. Skewness and kurtosis statistics were calculated for each factor, keeping respondents' assessments of their own values separate from their assessments of their organisations' values. These are reported below in Table 9.4.

Table 9.4 . Analysis of the distribution of scores by factor

	N	Mean	Std Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Individual Values					
Personal initiative	1172	4.58	.80	.053	.052
People orientation	1181	5.74	.86	-.950	1.449
Attention to detail	1177	5.35	.85	-.279	-.144
Demands made of staff	1180	3.52	.92	.778	.968
Collegiality	1185	4.98	.93	.059	-.428
Competitiveness	1178	4.45	1.11	-.156	-.279
Organisational Values					
Personal initiative	1182	3.91	.97	-.253	-.197
People orientation	1180	4.19	1.08	-.236	-.186
Attention to detail	1191	4.46	.92	-.110	-.015
Demands made of staff	1193	5.33	.96	-.551	.540
Collegiality	1190	5.04	.83	-.283	.226
Competitiveness	1184	3.75	1.29	.019	-.617

Skewness measures the degree to which the distribution of values deviates from symmetry around the mean. A score of zero represents perfect symmetry, and a score of between plus and minus 1 is considered excellent for psychometric purposes (George & Mallery, 1995). Every factor measured by this scale exhibits a score between plus and minus 1 and therefore the items are not producing skewed data on these factors.

Kurtosis measures the 'peakedness' or 'flatness' of a distribution. A value between ±1 is considered excellent and between ±2 acceptable (George & Mallery, 1995). Eleven of the twelve factors have a kurtosis between ±1 and the other factor is in the range ±2. Consequently, this distribution of data is acceptable for psychometric purposes.

When the distribution of scores on individual items was examined, it was noted that one item in these factors had a strongly negatively skewed distribution. A negative skew indicates a bias to the higher values. This item '*employees are given praise for good performance*' falls within the people orientation factor. This item had a mean score of 6.1 on the seven-point scale and appears to be a value that people found universally appealing. (This item presented no problems when the respondents' rated their own organisations' values.) When this item was removed from the people orientation factor on individual values, the skewness statistic for the factor fell to -.747 and the kurtosis fell to .713. With this item removed, the skewness and kurtosis statistics show that the data produced by the items on these factors is normally distributed, which suggests that the concerns of researchers about the inherently positive nature of values is misplaced with these items. This item has been removed from all subsequent analyses, producing a set of 23 items.

A reliability analysis shows that each of the six factors exhibits an alpha coefficient score above 0.6 (see Table 9.5), most of which are around 0.7 or above. It is generally accepted (e.g. George & Mallery, 1995) that alpha coefficient scores in the region of 0.7 are acceptable indicating that the items in each factor are measuring the same thing (Bowman & Ambrosini, 1997). Nunnally (1978) regards alpha coefficients above 0.6 as acceptable.

Table 9.5 Reliability analysis of the six factors

Alpha coefficients	Organisational Values	Individual Values
Personal initiative	.8107	.7643
People orientation	.7578	.7633
Attention to detail	.7630	.7278
Demands made of staff	.7003	.6105
Collegiality	.6922	.6813
Competitiveness	.6403	.6459

A Pearson product-moment correlation was calculated to investigate how closely aligned a measure of fit based on the twenty-three items in these six factors was to a measure of fit calculated on the full set of fifty-four items. A measure of fit was calculated for each respondent based on an addition of the person's difference scores (squared and square-rooted to remove the

direction of fit) between their own values and their assessment of their organisation's values for each separate item (see previous chapter). The correlation ($r = .938$, $p < .001$, $n = 1021$) shows that the two measures of P–O fit are very closely aligned (see Figure 9.1 below). Indeed, Cohen (1977) posits that in the behavioural sciences, Pearson product-moment correlations above .90 indicate that the two variables are the same.

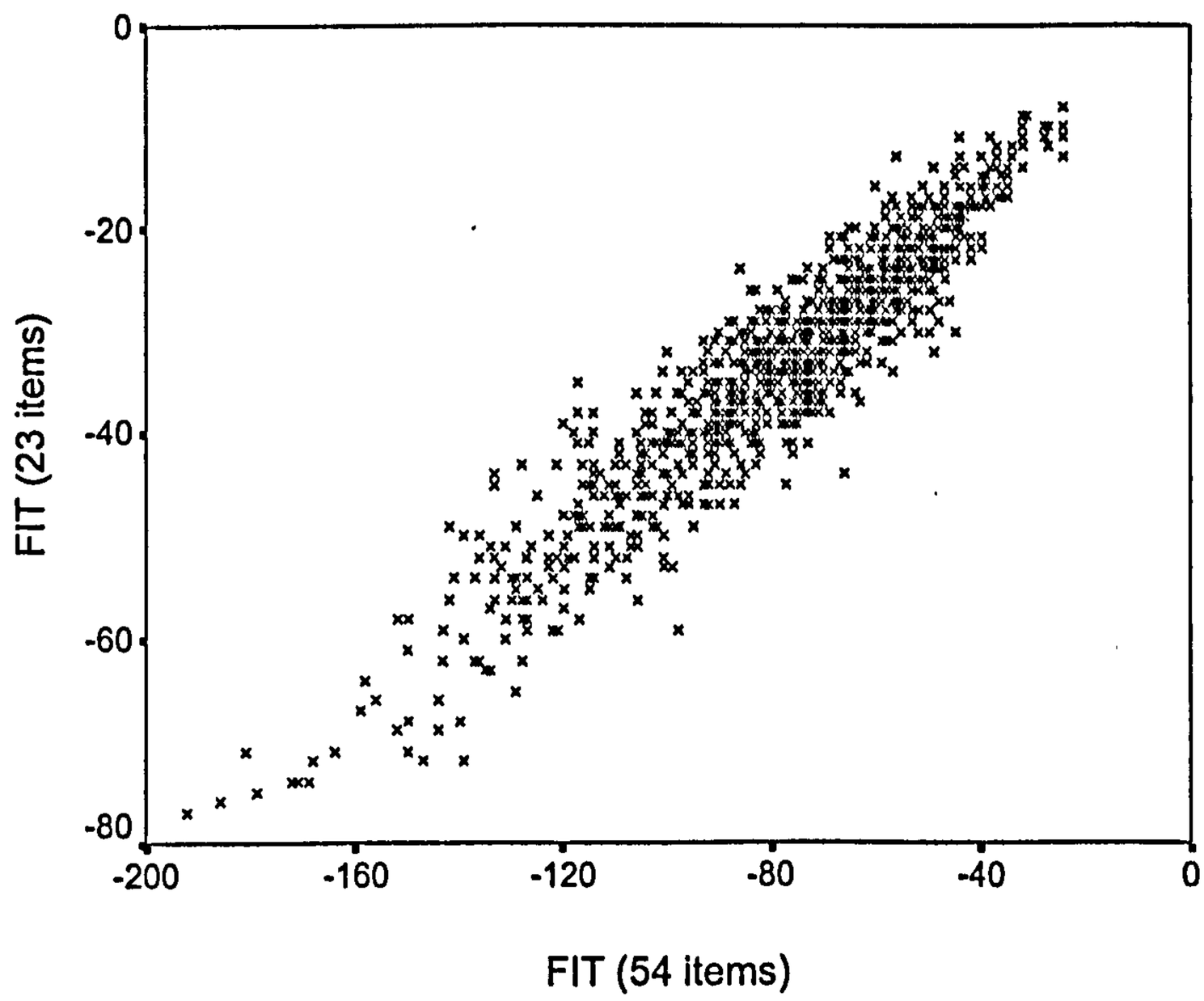

Figure 9.1 *Scatter diagram that shows the relationship between fit calculated with 23 items and fit calculated with 54 items*

As mentioned earlier, two items were included on the questionnaire that captured the respondents' direct (or generalised) sense of P–O fit and P–P fit. Although other studies have shown that direct and indirect measures of P–O fit are only moderately related in the $r = .3$ to $r = .5$ range (Cable & Judge, 1996, 1997; Kristof, 1996, 2000), these items were included to test further the new measure's construct validity. The results indicate that the relationship between P–O fit calculated with the revised measure and a direct measure of

P–O fit is broadly in line with previous studies ($r = .325$, $p < .001$, $n = 1107$), but the association with a direct measure of P–P fit is less strong ($r = .205$, $p < .001$, $n = 1108$). As the revised instrument is designed to capture an indirect measure of P–O fit and on this occasion the environmental prompt asked about the organisation's values (not the values of other employees), this pattern of relationships would be expected. Importantly, when looking at the relationship between the direct measure of P–O fit and the indirect measures of P–O fit, the 'shortened' version of the instrument (23 items) produced a similar correlation to the 'full' version (54 items).

The correlation between the direct measures of P–O fit and P–P fit is worthy of comment ($r = .308$, $p < .001$, $n = 1180$). Although these constructs are correlated, the level is perhaps lower than might be expected. With a correlation in the region of .3, the suspicion would be that these items are measuring different, but associated, things. The earlier discussion of P–O and P–P fit suggested that this is an important separation and this result supports this view. The correlation matrix of the revised OCP in its 54 and 23 item forms and the direct measures of P–O fit and P–P fit are shown below in Table 9.6.

Before going on to discuss the relationships between the indirect measurements of P–O fit with other constructs, it should be reiterated that these are only included to provide an initial indication that the measure is capturing the right sort of thing. Common-method variance and the cross-sectional nature of the study both limit the usefulness of these findings. Noting this proviso, the matrix showing the correlations between P–O fit as captured by the Likert-scaled versions of the OCP and constructs that other studies have shown to be related to P–O fit are shown in Table 9.6.

*Table 9.6 Correlation matrix between P–O fit and other constructs**

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Indirect P–O fit (23 items)	-33.59	11.91	(-)									
2	Indirect P–O fit (54 items)	-78.38	27.41	.938	(-)								
3	Affective commitment	4.33	1.12	.332	.364	(.82)							
4	Continuance commitment	4.42	1.14	-.064	-.078	.077	(.79)						
5	Normative commitment	3.59	0.89	.187	.186	.467	.226	(.71)					
6	Job satisfaction	4.97	1.36	.362	.385	.665	-.023	.275	(.88)				
7	Intent to leave	4.02	1.57	-.288	-.299	-.682	-.110	-.391	-.677	(.86)			
8	Direct P–J fit	5.69	0.90	.089	.078	.189	-.032	.060	.344	-.135	(.56)		
9	Direct P–O fit	4.66	1.51	.325	.326	.558	-.032	.255	.513	-.456	.175	(-)	
10	Direct P–P fit	4.63	1.43	.205	.240	.249	-.012	.122	.203	-.199	.159	.308	(-)

* All N are greater than 1014; correlations above ±.077 are significant at the .01 level and above ±.033 at the .05 level. The figures in brackets are the reliabilities for the scales. The variables without reliabilities are single item variables.

Previous P–O fit studies have suggested positive correlations between P–O fit and commitment and job satisfaction in the range .25 to .40 and a negative correlation between P–O fit and intent to leave in the range -.30 and -.40 (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991). In this study, P–O fit, as measured by the 23-item revised OCP rating scale, was broadly in line with these previous findings. As such they afford some confidence that the revised measure of indirect P–O fit employing a rating scale is capturing a similar construct to the original OCP. However, for the reasons of common-method variance and the cross-sectional nature of the study mentioned earlier, it is important not to place too much emphasis on to these findings with respect to causal relationships.

Summary

This chapter has examined the factor structure of the revised instrument. This analysis has shown that the revised instrument has a similar factor structure to the original OCP, although two of the original factors were not captured. However, this is not a problem as the revised instrument is only intended to capture an indication of P–O fit, rather than an absolute and fully inclusive measure of P–O fit. These six factors, which are common to both individual and organisational values, are defined by at least three items which do not have any significant cross-loadings. This produced a set of 24 items.

The distribution of scores was also examined. Given the concerns that some researchers (e.g. Meglino & Ravlin, 1998) have had with the social desirability of values, it was important to check that responses were normally distributed and not skewed towards one end of the scale. This analysis eliminated one item and yielded a set of 23 items. It was possible to eliminate this item because there were still four other items in this factor. A reliability analysis of these six factors indicated that they all exhibited acceptable reliability.

P–O fit calculated from the 23 items was then compared to P–O fit calculated with the full set of 54 items. These two measures of P–O fit were highly correlated. Then the correlation of these two different P–O fit calculations to constructs that previous studies have shown are related to P–O fit were compared. The correlation matrices of the 23-item and the 54-item forms of P–O fit to the other constructs was very similar, leading to the view that the shorter 23-item instrument is a practical alternative to the longer 54-item instrument.

CHAPTER 10

TEST–RETEST ANALYSIS

One of the main justifications for using values as the currency of fit is that they are 'fundamental and relatively enduring' (Chatman, 1991, p. 459). Therefore, values would be expected to remain relatively consistent over time. Providing this is indeed the case, any instrument that claimed to capture values should exhibit some test–retest reliability: i.e. subsequent applications of the instrument should capture similar scores for the values it measures.

Whereas values are thought to be relatively enduring, P–O fit is considered dynamic. As described in Chapter 4, many studies (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) have demonstrated a socialisation effect with greater tenure being associated with increases in P–O fit. This is consistent with the propositions in Schneider's ASA framework. However, by conceptualising and measuring P–O fit according to two sets of relatively enduring values, P–O fit would not be expected to be so dynamic that it did not exhibit some test–retest qualities.

Method

At the Open University Business School, a study was conducted into the impact of distance-taught management courses using a matched pair methodology. In this study, managers studying for their Professional Certificate in Management were asked if they would like to participate in the study. They were told that they would have to complete a questionnaire before the start of the course (T0), mid-way through the course (T1: after three months), at the end of the course (T2: after a further three months), and six months after the completion of the course (T3: i.e. a year from the start of the course). In addition, they were asked to find someone at work who performed

a similar job to themselves (i.e. a manager), who is not currently studying a management training course, who does not intend to take any managerial training over the next year, and who is prepared to complete the questionnaires at each time period. These 'mirrors' created a control group against whom the effects of the course, if any, could be compared. Involvement in the study was entirely optional and the managers were assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

The questionnaires in this survey were very long and included measures of job satisfaction, intent to leave, commitment, interpersonal trust at work, locus of control, self-efficacy, and creativity. In addition, the research team permitted the inclusion of the two scales (assessment of organisational and individual values) developed in the present study. Each of the values' scales contained 29 items following initial analysis of the data from the large-scale factor study reported in the previous chapter. These 29 items included all of the 23 items that subsequent analyses (see Chapters 8 and 9) reduced the set to. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 4.

For a test–retest analysis of the normative version of the OCP, only the responses of the 'mirrors' have been used (i.e. the control group). These managers come from a wide variety of organisations and work at different levels (from junior manager to director) of their organisations. Some 64% were male and 36% female. The average age was 36 years.

As is usually the case with longitudinal studies such as this, there was a considerable drop-out rate amongst participants (despite considerable efforts by the researchers to keep people onboard). At the start of the project, there were 72 members of the control group. After three months, this had dropped to 61 and after a further three months to 56. A year after the start of the course, only 31 members of the control group completed the final questionnaire. All of these people testified to being in "broadly similar jobs" in the same organisation throughout the twelve months of the study and they reported that their organisations' culture and values had "remained reasonably constant" throughout the study.

Results

Due to the volatility associated with individual items, a mean score for each factor was calculated for each of the six scales derived from the factor analysis reported in Chapter 9 (total of 23 items) at each time period for both individual and organisational values. Skewness and kurtosis statistics were calculated for the data on each factor. The only non-normal statistics appeared on the kurtosis statistics for the T3 means of people orientation (individual values), attention to detail (individual values), and collegiality (organisational values). As only these three statistics (of the seventy-two calculated) exhibited a non-normal distribution (the distributions were slightly 'flat'), the data set can, to all intents and purposes, be considered normally distributed.

Once the quality of the data was checked, Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to analyse the degree to which the values captured by the instrument at three months, six months and twelve months corresponded to the original values. This was conducted by scale score and done for respondents' assessments of both their own values and their perceptions of the values of their organisation. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 10.1.

Cohen (1977) supplied the rule of thumb with Pearson product-moment correlations for behavioural science data. Correlations of .10 are considered small. Correlations of .30 are considered medium. Correlations of .50 are considered large. He argues that the largest correlation coefficient between two independent behavioural constructs is .50. Cohen (1977) states that correlation coefficients above this level are normally only found in studies of reliability and indicate some reliability in the measurements. Correlation coefficients of .90 are posited as meaning that the two measurements are measuring the same thing. Hence, when using Pearson product-moment correlations to examine the reliability of a measure over time, coefficients of .50–.90 indicate the range over which there might be said to be evidence of some test–retest reliability. As can be seen in Table 10.1, most of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for the factor scores are above 0.5 signifying some test–retest reliability.

Table 10.1 Correlations that show how the fit scores for each factor change over time

	N	Correlation	Significance (two-tailed)	Correlation	Si (
		Personal Values		Organisational	
Personal initiative					
T0 → T1 (3 months later)	62	.660	<.001	.779	
T0 → T2 (6 months after T0)	56	.756	<.001	.801	
T0 → T3 (12 months after T0)	31	.591	<.001	.694	
People orientation					
T0 → T1 (3 months later)	62	.601	<.001	.641	
T0 → T2 (6 months after T0)	55	.357	.007	.752	
T0 → T3 (12 months after T0)	31	.441	.013	.359	
Attention to detail					
T0 → T1 (3 months later)	62	.725	<.001	.735	
T0 → T2 (6 months after T0)	56	.681	<.001	.725	
T0 → T3 (12 months after T0)	31	.512	.003	.393	
Demands made of staff					
T0 → T1 (3 months later)	62	.533	<.001	.685	
T0 → T2 (6 months after T0)	56	.682	<.001	.741	
T0 → T3 (12 months after T0)	31	.663	<.001	.600	
Collegiality					
T0 → T1 (3 months later)	62	.634	<.001	.690	
T0 → T2 (6 months after T0)	56	.552	<.001	.729	
T0 → T3 (12 months after T0)	31	.566	<.001	.424	
Competitiveness					
T0 → T1 (3 months later)	62	.724	<.001	.665	
T0 → T2 (6 months after T0)	56	.740	<.001	.739	
T0 → T3 (12 months after T0)	31	.754	<.001	.575	

In addition to an examination of the test–retest reliability of the component factors, it was possible to explore the test–retest reliability of the whole measure (i.e. all 23 items). As described at the start of this chapter, previous findings on P–O fit and socialisation (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) lead to the hypothesis that those people who remain in the organisation will experience an increase in their P–O fit. But, as the average tenure of the members of the control group was 9.3 years, any socialisation would be expected to be quite slight. The results of this analysis are displayed in the following table. The correlation coefficients are in the range .561 (over twelve months) to .629 (over six months). These correlation coefficients are all above .50 indicating some test–retest reliability (Cohen, 1977). However,

whilst there is evidence of some test–retest reliability, these correlation coefficients are towards the lower end of the range. This suggests that there is some movement in P–O fit over time, as predicted by those (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Schneider, 1987) who argue that socialisation (i.e. change in fit) is possible during organisational membership. Taken overall, these results suggest that the revised instrument exhibits some test–retest reliability and that P–O fit as measured by this instrument is dynamic.

Table 10.2 Correlations that show how P–O fit scores change over time

	N	Correlation	Significance
Person–Organisation Fit (23 items)			
T0 → T1 (3 months later)	60	.582	<.001
T0 → T2 (6 months after T0)	55	.629	<.001
T0 → T3 (12 months after T0)	31	.561	<.001

To investigate whether P–O fit increased for those people who remained with their employers during the year, a paired sample T-Test was calculated. The results are displayed in Table 10.3. The data in this table show that the P–O fit of these 29 people* who stayed with their employers during the year increased at each time period, but the increase was gradual with the improvement at three months not being significant. However, the further increases at 6 and 12 months were both significant at the 95% confidence level, which supports the socialisation findings of Chatman (1991) and O'Reilly et al (1991).

Table 10.3 Changes in P–O fit

	N	Mean	SD	Significance of difference to T0
Person–Organisation Fit (23 items)				
T0	29	-36.10	8.44	–
T1	29	-35.31	12.75	.65
T2	29	-32.97	10.89	.04
T3	29	-31.62	13.35	.04

* Table 10.2 indicates an N of 31 respondents at T0 and T3. Two of these people did not complete questionnaires at either T1 or T2. Hence the N in Table 10.3 is 29 (i.e. the number of respondents who completed questionnaires at every collection point).

Summary

This short chapter has examined the test–retest reliability of the revised instrument during a one-year longitudinal study. This longitudinal study shows that the instrument provides test–retest reliability in line with the stability that would be expected with an instrument that captures work values.

In addition, it was possible to examine whether the revised instrument could pick up the socialisation effect that Chatman (1991) and O'Reilly et al (1991) were able to find with the original OCP. The results produced a significant effect for increases in P–O fit during the year, thereby replicating these earlier OCP studies. Overall, these two findings increase confidence that the revised measure is sturdily built and captures a similar construct to the original OCP.

CHAPTER 11

MULTI-LEVEL ANALYSIS

The final pilot study looked at the new instrument's ability to capture P–O fit at different levels of analysis and its ability to capture P–P fit. By its very nature, P–O fit is a cross–levels construct. A cross–levels construct is one in which the two sides of the interaction are conceptualised as being at different levels of a hierarchy. In the case of P–O fit, the two different levels are the person (an individual) and the organisation (a grouping of individuals working in the same environment). In addition, person–group (P–G fit) has been proposed as sitting between these two levels (Jackson et al, 1991; Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 1998; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown & Stevens, 2001). P–G fit can be conceptualised in many ways. A group can be any subset of the organisation (Kristof, 1996). For example, P–G fit might relate to someone's membership of a small group of workers, a project team, a department, or a subculture. But the P–O fit literature has largely ignored level issues such as the existence of sub-units and subcultures (Van Vianen, 2000), which is important given that people in corporations are often unable to distinguish between levels of ownership to identify their employer and often sub-levels have more salience for employees (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 1998; Klein, Dansereau & Hall, 1994).

The organisation in the main study (see Chapters 12 to 15) is a utilities company comprising a dozen or so previously independent companies. At the moment when the study was conducted, the group had only been amalgamated for 18 months and was still tackling issues of integration. Each of the business units still maintained its own character, its own regional focus, and much of its independence. There was very little interaction between the business units. It was necessary, therefore, to explore the new instrument's ability to capture P–O fit at different levels of an organisation. The four levels that appear most

clearly defined in a multi-unit corporate appear to be (1) the corporate level, (2) the business unit level, (3) the department or sub-group level, and (4) the individual level. The instrument's ability to explore these different levels of P–O fit was examined in this pilot study.

In addition, these pilot studies have not examined the new instrument's ability to (1) capture individuals' fit to other peoples' assessments of organisational environments and (2) capture P–P fit. The pilot studies reported in Chapters 9 and 10 compared individuals' values to their own perceptions of their organisations' values. The purpose of this pilot study is to rectify these omissions and thereby provide an operational trial of the revised instrument in an organisation that mirrors the large corporation that provides the site of the main study, but on a smaller scale.

Method

This pilot study was conducted at an early stage of the development of the revised instrument. Findings that were relevant to the construction of the individual items were discussed in Chapter 8 very briefly. Following the other pilot studies, it is possible to return to this study to explore fit at different levels and different types of fit. The other pilot studies reduced the original number of items from 54 to 23. The final 23 items were worded in their final forms in this pilot study. This means that in this pilot study P–O fit and P–P fit can be calculated in the same way as the main study.

The organisation used for this pilot study was a British-owned engineering company that had purchased an American engineering company in the same industry just two years earlier. The participants in the study worked in either the company's London or New York offices. Forty-two employees in each office from a broad spectrum of grades and jobs provided a mirror image for comparison purposes. The participants were assured of complete anonymity and asked to return their questionnaires through the post. Sixty-four questionnaires, 32 in each office, were returned which represents a response rate of 76.2%. Men comprised 89.4% of the group; the average age was 40.6 years and average tenure with the firm was 10.2 years.

The questionnaire contained 58-item scales to capture the participants' perceptions of their organisations' values and their own values (54 items developed from the OCP and 4 items suggested by respondents in the first pilot study reported in Chapter 8). Those items that do not appear in the final 23 items of the revised instrument have been discarded from the reported data. In addition, the questionnaire contained the same measures of organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intent to leave, and interpersonal trust that were used in the pilot study reported in Chapter 9. Although this study has a cross-sectional design, these behavioural measures were treated as dependent variables in the analysis to provide further insight into the construct validity of the new instrument. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 5.

P–O fit

As in the previous pilot studies, every participant was asked to complete the revised instrument in response to two questions: "*how characteristic of your organisation's culture are the following items?*" and "*how desirable is it for each of the following items to be a part of the organisation you work for?*" This allowed for the collection of data on perceptions of the organisation's values and the participant's own value preferences.

In this pilot study, four different groupings of peoples' perceptions of organisational values corresponded to meaningful divisions within the organisation. The 'highest' level of fit was corporate P–O fit. This was calculated by comparing an individual's values with to the average response of the other employees in the study (excluding the individual's own assessment of the organisation's values to remove its confounding nature). In this study, this form of P–O fit is termed 'Corporate P–O fit' to separate it out from other forms of fit.

In this study, Corporate P–O fit was hypothesised as being unrelated to the dependent variables of commitment, satisfaction, intent to leave, trust, and moods. This hypothesis was based on several factors. First, the two offices had only been part of the same corporate entity for two years. As values are relatively enduring, it seemed unlikely that there had been much convergence.

Second, there was comparatively little contact between the two offices. As a result, it seems unlikely that the overall average assessment of organisational values would have any meaning to the participants, and therefore, be unrelated to the dependent variables.

The next highest level of P–O fit is the fit of employees to the values of their business unit. In this case, there are two business units: the UK and American offices. This form of P–O fit is termed 'Business Unit P–O fit'. It is closely aligned with other researchers' conceptualisations of P–O fit in most published studies. As a result, it is hypothesised that Business Unit P–O fit will be moderately associated with the dependent variables in a similar way to P–O fit in earlier studies (e.g. Chatman, 1991).

Below this level of P–O fit is the fit of employees to the values of their department, which is closely aligned to P–G fit. In order for this form of P–O fit to be calculated at least three respondents in each department must have completed questionnaires. Three people are necessary because assessments of cultures must involve more than one person's assessment of the environment if it is to avoid being idiosyncratic fit (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). As the person whose fit is being assessed must also be removed from the assessment of the 'O', there must be two other respondents in each department for a 'department P–O fit' to be calculated. It was possible to calculate the 'department P–O fit' for 51 people. The P–O fit literature is silent on the comparative powers of P–O fit and P–G fit to influence individuals' behaviour (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 1998). Both social network theory (Brass, 1995; Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994; Krackhardt & Brass, 1994; Scott, 1991; Wellman, 1988) and the interpersonal attraction literature, which was reviewed in Chapter 3, suggest that proximity, similarity of position, and contact influence individuals' behaviour. Such influences are likely to occur at the level of the organisational sub-unit. Hence, department P–O fit is predicted to be associated with the dependent variables.

It was also possible to calculate the fit of people to their own perceptions of the culture, as previous pilot studies had done. This is termed 'individual P–O fit'. As this form of P–O fit compares the individuals' own values to their own perceptions of the organisational values, this form of P–O fit is hypothesised to be strongly related to the dependent variables.

P–P fit

Whereas P–O fit involves the comparison of individuals' values to various groupings of peoples' assessments of organisational values, P–P fit involves the comparison of individuals' values to other peoples' values (Van Vianen, 2000). In this study it was possible to calculate this form of fit at three different levels: corporate, business unit, and department. As with P–O fit, calculations of P–P fit exclude the individuals' own values from the 'second P'.

Little is know about P–P fit relationships to organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intentions to leave, and trust (Van Vianen, 2000). In Chapter 5, it was argued that this form of fit was more closely related to Schneider's original conceptualisation of fit than P–O fit. Consequently, it is expected to have more psychological meaning to participants than P–O fit. As a result, P–P fit is hypothesised to be related to the dependent variables.

Commitment

Participants were asked to complete Cook and Wall's (1980) 9-item organisational commitment scale and Allen and Meyer's (1990) 24-item (3 x 8) affective, continuance and normative commitment scales. These four commitment scales include reverse keyed items and they were randomly distributed in one commitment table. All four scales are scored on an identical seven point Likert scale. The two extremes were "Agree strongly" and "Disagree strongly". Alpha coefficients were calculated for the four scales to assess their internal reliability. These coefficients are displayed in Table 11.1.

Table 11.1 Means, standard deviations, correlations and alpha coefficients for the four commitment scales

		Mean	SD	N	1	2	3	4
1	Affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990)	4.22	1.05	64	(.81)			
2	Continuance commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990)	4.00	1.13	64	.22	(.80)		
3	Normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990)	3.62	1.06	64	.38**	.43**	(.79)	
4	General commitment (Cook & Wall, 1980)	5.06	0.86	64	.83**	.23	.33**	(.59)

Note: Correlations indicated ** are significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

The alpha coefficients for the three Allen and Meyer (1990) scales are all 'good' (George & Mallery, 1995) and therefore their groupings of the items have been used. The nine-item Cook and Wall (1980) measure, however, exhibited only 'questionable' reliability (George & Mallery, 1995). The high correlation of this measure with Allen and Meyer's (1990) measure of affective commitment ($r = .83$, $p > .01$) suggests that Cook and Wall's (1980) measure of general commitment is a measure of affective commitment.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction was assessed with a two-item scale: "*Generally speaking I am very satisfied with my job*" and "*I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do on this job*". These scales use seven-point Likert scales with the same polar dimensions as the commitment scales. Previous studies have shown that job satisfaction correlates with both person–job fit and person–organisation fit (Caldwell and O'Reilly, 1990; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al., 1991). Given the multi-level nature of this pilot study, it was proposed that an employee's satisfaction with their job should be different to their satisfaction with the organisation. To investigate this proposition, the term "job" was replaced with "organisation" to produce a two-item scale for "organisational satisfaction". However, subsequent reliability analysis of these four items provided only moderate support for the two hypothesised constructs: the alpha coefficient for job satisfaction being .6323 and the alpha coefficient for organisational satisfaction being .6886. When the four items were combined, the inter-item alpha coefficient was .8325, which suggests that they are measuring the same thing. In addition, a principal components analysis with varimax rotation revealed only one factor for the four items. As a result, these items have been aggregated and reported as "satisfaction".

Intent to leave

Intentions to leave were measured with a four-item seven-point Likert scale (Agree strongly 7 to Disagree strongly 1): (1) "*I often think of leaving this job*" (2) "*I often think of leaving this organisation*" (3) "*I intend to leave this job within the next 12 months*" and (4) "*I intend to leave this organisation*

within the next 12 months". As a principal components analysis with varimax rotation revealed only one factor, a single factor "intent to leave" was calculated and reported. The inter-item alpha coefficient for these four items was .9163, which suggests that they are measuring the same thing.

Interpersonal trust at work

This was measured using nine items from Cook and Wall's (1980) twelve-item scale. Both trust in management (5 items) and trust in colleagues (4 items) were measured. The alpha coefficient for trust in management was .5802, which is poor. This figure prompted a review of the items. One item '*Our firm has a poor future unless it can attract better managers*' seems qualitatively different to the others. Rather than being about trust in management, it appears to be about perceptions of the quality of managers. When this item was removed, and the reliability coefficient was recalculated with the remaining four items, the alpha coefficient was .8428, which is good evidence that the four-item scale is measuring the same construct. The alpha coefficient for trust in colleagues was .8412, which is also good (George & Mallery, 1995).

Other variables

The last section of the questionnaire asked participants for biographical data. This included: age (in years), gender (1 = male, 2 = female), and the department in which the respondent works. Sixteen participants refused to give their age and seventeen refused to give their gender. Respondents were asked to say how long they had been employed by the organisation and how long they had been doing their job. Both tenure in the job and tenure in the organisation are quoted, but caution should be used when using the job tenure data for the reason that some of the respondents have performed very similar work in other organisations. Fourteen respondents chose not to complete the tenure section of the questionnaire.

Results

A correlation matrix was produced to examine the relationships between the variables. This matrix is displayed in Table below 11.2.

Table 11.2 Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Forms of fit								
1	Corporate P–O fit	-33.5	7.5	–					
2	Corporate P–P fit	-20.7	5.5	.534**	–				
3	Business Unit P–O fit	-33.1	7.9	.943**	.560**	–			
4	Business Unit P–P fit	-20.6	5.7	.573**	.952**	.607**	–		
5	Department P–O fit	-41.5	13.1	.830**	.488**	.867**	.491**	–	
6	Department P–P fit	-21.3	6.0	.491**	.850**	.572**	.880**	.447**	–
7	Individual P–O fit	-35.5	13.3	.632**	.341**	.654**	.342**	.794**	.277*
	Outcomes								
8	Affective commitment	4.2	1.0	.185	.251*	.180	.208	.415**	.183
9	Continuance commitment	4.0	1.1	.378**	.285*	.378**	.292*	.250	.152
10	Normative commitment	3.6	1.1	.236	.279*	.306*	.240	.309*	.247
11	General commitment	5.1	0.9	.094	.139	.077	.114	.234	.267
12	Satisfaction	5.1	1.1	.181	.159	.180	.145	.271*	.113
13	Intent to leave	3.2	1.6	-.209	-.297*	-.214	-.287*	-.295*	-.229
14	Trust in management	4.0	1.2	.266*	.113	.213	.104	.324*	.015
15	Trust in colleagues	5.4	1.0	.150	.383**	.184	.390**	.278*	.321*

		7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Outcomes continued							
8	Affective commitment	.518**	(.81)					
9	Continuance commitment	.322*	.222	(.80)				
10	Normative commitment	.327**	.384**	.431**	(.79)			
11	General commitment	.495**	.825**	.225	.330**	(.59)		
12	Satisfaction	.521**	.491**	.075	.196	.644**	(.83)	
13	Intent to leave	-,540**	-.649**	-.249*	-.447**	-.678**	-.531**	(.92)
14	Trust in management	.593**	.427**	.100	.133	.562**	.563**	-.443**
15	Trust in colleagues	.457**	.498**	.355**	.328**	.499**	.245	-.517**

		14	15
14	Trust in management	(.84)	
15	Trust in colleagues	.383**	(.84)

*p < .05; **p < .01
Figures in brackets are alpha coefficients for inter-item reliability of each construct. Constructs without reliabilities are single-item constructs. All n = 64.

This pilot study was conducted to explore two aspects of fit. The first objective was concerned with different levels of fit. As noted, previous studies of P–O fit have focused on fit between the individual and the organisation. This study allowed the observation of P–O fit between the individual and the corporation, the organisation, and the department, as well as to individuals'

own sense of what the organisation's values are. Of the various levels of fit, the most powerful correlate to the outcomes of commitment, satisfaction, intent to leave, and interpersonal trust, was the fit between individuals' own values and their own assessment of their organisation's values. Although this figure is likely to be inflated by common method error, it is the form of fit that should be most associated with individuals' behaviour. This form of fit does, after all, capture individuals' own perceptions of their fit, albeit captured indirectly rather than directly.

An examination of the correlation matrix shows that fit at the corporate and organisational levels is very similar. This is the case whether the comparison is corporate and organisational P–O fit or corporate and organisational P–P fit. The correlation between corporate and organisational P–O fit is .943 ($n=63$, $p<.001$) and between corporate and organisational P–P fit the correlation is .952 ($n=63$, $p<.001$). The method of calculating these two forms of fit is a key factor producing the strong association between corporate and organisational fit. Taking corporate P–O fit as an example, these only differ in that the 'O' represents the mean of all respondents in the survey, rather than just those in one of the countries. Hence, the corporate level of fit merely has double the number of respondents' environmental assessments and crucially it includes all of those included in the organisational P–O fit assessments. To investigate this confound further, an independent-samples t-test was run to see whether the P–O fit of American-based employees to the British division's values was significantly weaker than the fit of British employees to the same values. Similar t-tests were also run for the American division's values and for P–P fit. The results are displayed in Table 11.3 below. Although the results demonstrate that the P–O and P–P fit of employees to their own division is greater than the other division's members, only in the case of P–P fit to the British division is it significantly different. As a result, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about the differences between corporate and organisational fit from this sample with this methodology.

Table 11.3 Independent-sample t-tests of fit to each division analysed by division

	Employees	N	Mean	SD	Mean Std Error	t	df	Sig.
P–O fit British Division	British	32	-31.4	7.4	1.3	.40	61	.694
	American	31	-32.1	6.5	1.2			
P–O fit American Division	British	32	-37.1	7.6	1.3	-1.14	61	.256
	American	31	-34.8	8.2	1.5			
P–P fit British Division	British	32	-20.1	6.3	1.1	2.71	61	.009
	American	31	-23.9	4.6	0.8			
P–P fit American Division	British	32	-22.0	6.6	1.2	-.58	61	.565
	American	31	-21.1	5.1	0.9			

The second objective of this pilot study was to examine differences between P–O fit and P–P fit. P–O fit and P–P fit are conceptualised as being different because P–O fit is concerned with fit to assessment of organisational environments, whereas P–P fit is concerned with employees' fit to other employees' values. However, given Schneider's argument that 'people make the place' and the ASA cycle, some degree of association between P–O fit and P–P fit would be expected. This is what is found in the data in the correlation matrix in Table 11.2. For example, the correlation between departmental P–O fit and P–P fit ($r=.447$, $p<.01$) shows that the two different conceptualisations of fit are associated, but not to the same degree as different levels of the same form of fit (e.g. business unit and departmental P–O fit $r=.867$, $p<.01$). The notion that P–O fit and P–P fit are different, but associated, forms of fit is supported elsewhere in the correlation matrix. Of particular interest is the pattern of correlations between different forms of fit and the two types of interpersonal trust captured in this study. Whereas forms of P–O fit are related to interpersonal trust in managers, forms of P–P fit are related to interpersonal trust in colleagues. Managers, by definition, are people at a higher level to the respondents, which accords with the cross-levels conceptualisation of P–O fit. In contrast, colleagues are, by definition, at the same level to the respondents, which corresponds to the same-level conceptualisation of P–P fit.

Another objective of this pilot study was to check that the revised instrument would capture individuals' fit to other people (both to other peoples' assessments of organisational values and to individual values), as the previous studies had only examined participants' fit to their own assessment of

their organisations' values. As expected and already noted, individual P–O fit was found to be the most powerful correlate with outcomes that have been found to be associated with P–O fit in previous studies (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991). However, forms of fit to other peoples' values and their assessments of organisational values did produce the correlates that might be expected. Although this is a small-scale study and care should be taken not to make too much of the results, it is interesting to note the complexity of the correlation matrix: different forms of fit seem to be associated with different types of outcome. The pattern of relationships between forms of fit and interpersonal trust has already been commented on. In addition, it is worth drawing attention to department P–O fit because this appears to be a more powerful correlate to the outcomes than corporate and business unit P–O fit. This form of P–O fit is strongly correlated with affective commitment, which "refers to employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in, the organisation" (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 2; $r=.415$, $p<.01$) and moderately related to normative commitment, which "refers to employees' feelings of obligation to remain with the organisation" (Allen and Meyer, 1990, p. 2; $r=.309$, $p<.05$), satisfaction ($r=.271$, $p<.05$), and intent to leave ($r=-.295$, $p<.05$). These results suggest that capturing P–O fit at the departmental level will be important in the main study.

Summary

This pilot study had three objectives. First, it tested the instrument in a practical, 'real world' situation with respondents a little suspicious of the purpose of the study, but being told (truthfully) that the results would be confidential and used only for academic purposes. This circumstance is very similar to the main study. The results demonstrate that the instrument appears to pick up fit in these circumstances and it retains its associations with outcomes that other studies have shown to be related to P–O fit. On a related concern, this study also showed that the instrument could be used to compare individuals' values with those of their colleagues and their colleagues' assessments of the organisational environment. This was an important test because all of the previous pilot studies had only looked at individual P–O fit.

The second objective of this pilot study was to look at different levels of fit. The results of this study suggest that the level of fit is important. It seems that the closer the fit is to the individual's perceptions (i.e. department or subculture), the greater the predictability of the outcomes. Thus, this small-scale study supports Vancouver and Schmitt's (1991) findings and Magnusson and Endler's (1977) condition that interactional research should concentrate on fields that have psychological meaning for the individual. The issue of subculture (or departmental) fit has been largely ignored in the literature (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 1998; Kristof, 1996; Sackmann, 1992), but these findings suggest that it is an important consideration for any researcher wanting to understand P–O fit. In addition, this pilot study demonstrated both the methodological and perceptual difficulties disentangling corporate from organisational fit.

The third objective for this study was to examine the instrument's ability to capture both P–O and P–P fit. As far as is known, this is the first usage of an OCP-based instrument to capture P–P fit*. The results do not offer much insight into the nature of P–P fit, except to say that the pattern of correlations appears different to the pattern of correlations exhibited by P–O fit. When associations between P–O fit and P–P fit and interpersonal trust are considered, there is tentative support for the notion that P–O fit and P–P fit are different constructs. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that it will be worthwhile following Van Vianen's (2000) example and capturing P–P fit during the main study.

At this point, it is important to acknowledge some of the limitations of this pilot study that prevent too many conclusions being drawn from it. The first limitation is that the study is a cross-sectional one. Consequently, there is a danger that the outcomes variables are seen as being predicted by the measures of fit. This would be a mistake. The cross-sectional nature of the study means that this study can just show the associations between fit and outcome variables. The second limitation of the study is that it looks at behaviour in one organisation. As a result, all the usual caveats about

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* The study by Van Vianen (2000) was published after this study was presented at the Academy of Management conference in Boston, 1997.

generalising from single company case studies apply. The third limitation relates to a methodological issue. Participants were asked for their assessment of the organisation's values in response to the prompt "*how characteristic of your organisation's culture are the following items?*" This prompt directs the attention of the respondent to organisational level characteristics, which might be a concern when trying to capture corporate or departmental fit. In this study, it was not practical (and perhaps not desirable given common-method error issues) to ask respondents to complete the same set of items in response to three or four different prompts. However, this limitation draws attention to the issue and it leads to the conclusion that in the main study it will important to ensure that the prompts are suited to the level of fit that respondents should comment on.

SECTION SUMMARY

PILOT STUDIES

The main purpose of the pilot studies has been to develop and test a Likert-scaled questionnaire based on the OCP for the measurement of P–O fit and P–P fit. Chapter 7 dealt with some of the methodological problems associated with such measurement including the issue of whether values can be collected using a normative scale. Chapter 8 contained a review of several studies that were used to develop the individual items that were suited to the British business environment. In Chapter 9, these items were tested in a large-scale study that revealed the factor structure of the items and which allowed the number of items to be reduced from 54 to 23. This study also demonstrated that the factor structure of the new instrument exhibited a structure similar to that found in the original OCP. In addition, the study produced data that showed that the associations found between P–O fit and outcomes such as commitment, satisfaction and intent to leave in previous studies were replicated by the revised instrument.

Chapter 10 reported on a study of the revised instrument's test–retest reliability. P–O fit was shown to be stable over three, six and twelve months. In addition, analysis of the data showed that the revised instrument could detect a socialisation effect amongst employees, thereby replicating previous P–O fit studies that have used the card-sort version of the OCP (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991). Chapter 11 demonstrated that the new instrument can capture different types and different levels of fit, and has the ability to do these things in a 'real' organisational setting.

These pilot studies have produced results that demonstrate that the new instrument is capturing P–O fit in the intended way. Importantly, concerns that values must be captured ipsatively have been addressed. Overall, these pilot studies give confidence that this reworked version of the OCP in normative

guise is an adequate substitute that can be used on large numbers of dispersed respondents.

SECTION 3

MAIN STUDY

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CHAPTER 12

METHOD

Hypotheses

To recap, the literature review in the first part of this thesis highlighted two gaps in the P–O fit literature. These gaps are missing empirical tests of Schneider's (1987; Schneider et al, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2000) propositions that organisations attract and select those people who share the values of the organisation. The overall effect of the cycle and the attrition stage of the cycle have been tested and supported, but there have been no direct tests of the attraction and selection propositions. Although these propositions might be tested in many different ways, the literature review suggested that the most direct test of the hypotheses would be to examine the value congruence between applicants and the organisation (P–O fit) or between and applicants and the people employed in the organisation (P–P fit). To this end, four working hypotheses were developed in Chapter 6:

1a: The value congruence between applicants and the organisation will be greater than the value congruence between people in the control group and the organisation.

1b: The value congruence between applicants and the employees of the recruiting organisation will be greater than the value congruence between people in the control group and the employees of the recruiting organisation.

2a: Person–organisation value congruence will predict applicants' performance in the selection process.

2b: The value congruence between applicants and the employees of the recruiting organisation will predict applicants' performance in the selection process.

A series of pilot studies were conducted to produce an instrument that could be used to capture P–O and P–P fit with a large population of remote respondents. In addition to developing and testing this questionnaire, these pilot studies produced some findings that should shape the main study's test of the hypotheses. These findings combine with the literature review to influence the choice of organisation, the type of recruitment examined, and the forms of fit measured.

Method

When conducting recruitment and selection research there is a natural tendency to study graduate entry into organisations (Rynes, Orlitzky & Bretz, 1997). Apart from the proximity to the researcher (although this was not a factor with this study), the great advantage of using graduate entry is the sample size it offers at one point in time. In addition, the sorts of vacancies offered to graduates are junior managerial or trainee professional jobs, which allow the researcher to make inferences to managerial or professional work. There are few alternatives if sample size and the type of work are important. In addition, in the current study graduate entry is an interesting choice because it allows direct comparisons to other P–O fit studies, such as the one by Chatman (1991), which this study extends into the attraction and selection phases of the ASA cycle. For these reasons, this study also chose to look at the entry of graduates into work. However, there are some drawbacks to using graduates, such as the relative inexperience, naivete, or lack of understanding of the corporate world of the applicants, which can cause problems. These problems will be discussed in more depth later in the thesis.

In choosing the organisation, or organisations, to study several factors came into play. First, previous P–O fit studies (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Sheridan, 1992) have demonstrated that studying fit in about half a dozen different companies is sufficient to demonstrate P–O fit effects. This

seems relevant to this study as it extends the work of Chatman (1991) into the attraction and selection phases of the ASA cycle.

Second, although this study extends Chatman's (1991) work, there is no need to replicate her difficulties disentangling different types of fit. As described in Chapter 5, her choice to study recruitment into accounting firms creates confusion as to the nature of the fit she was capturing. Accounting firms exist within a strong and sharply defined professional culture and hence there appears to be an element of person–vocation fit intermingled with P–O fit. Sheridan (1992), who also investigated fit within the accounting industry, repeated this problem. Hence, it seems sensible to study organisations that do not have an obvious industry or professional culture so that P–O fit means 'fit to the organisation' and not 'fit to the industry or profession'.

Third, the findings of the multi-level pilot study reported in Chapter 11 suggested that levels of fit are relevant to any investigation of fit. Moreover, this pilot study suggested that it is important to measure people's fit to the values of environments or people that have psychological meaning to the people whose fit is being investigated. In that pilot study, measuring P–O fit at the departmental level was the most powerful form of P–O fit (other than the fit of peoples' values to their own sense of the organisations' values).

A group of companies that satisfies these conditions is utilities companies. These organisations do not have the strong associations with particular professions or vocations that accountancy firms, banks, hospitals and other such organisations do. Instead, they employ a wide cross-section of people in a wide variety of jobs. For example, they employ clerical and administrative staff, shop assistants, sales and marketing people, engineers, human resources staff, cleaners, customer care staff, and even some professional staff such as accountants and lawyers. It is usual for these corporations to organise with functional structures, making departmental fit relatively straightforward to capture.

Since the privatisation of British utility companies in the 1980s and early 1990s, there has been much integration of the separate companies. It has been commonplace for new groupings to form making new corporations comprising water, electric and telecommunications operations. This phenomena means that the study of just one utility is likely to supply the

necessary diversity and number of organisational operating units. Consequently, these corporations exhibit the qualities required for an examination of the present study's hypotheses.

The corporation chosen as the site of this study was one of Britain's largest utility companies. As the organisation asked for and was granted anonymity, their identity is not disclosed within this thesis. However, some salient descriptors that do not give away their identity can be given. This is a utility company with a specific regional focus, although their acquisitions post-privatisation broadened their spread into other parts of the United Kingdom. At the time of the study, two new business units had been acquired within the past year, and several more shortly before that. The business units included power generation and supply companies, water companies, a telecommunications company, and two information technology services companies. The company had the feel of a constellation of separate business units with a corporate headquarters that was still in the initial stages of constructing a corporate identity. Each business unit was functionally structured with only the Legal, Corporate Finance and Human Resources departments having a significant presence in the corporate headquarters.

The situation of the Human Resources department in the corporate headquarters proved to be a major benefit in this study. This department organised and managed the annual round of graduate recruitment. This study was conducted during the department's first opportunity to manage a corporate graduate entry and they were still finding their feet. All of the business units were happy for the corporate Human Resources department to run their graduate recruitment with one corporate brochure, one corporate on-campus presentation, and one corporate point of contact. Although the corporate Human Resources staff administered and managed the process, staff within each business unit conducted their own selection, which involved (1) an initial sifting of applications, (2) an initial interview, (3) sometimes an assessment centre or other selection tests, and (4) a second interview.

Capturing the values of applicants

Research questionnaires were sent to applicants by staff in the corporate Human Resources department. The procedure was as follows. If someone was interested in applying to the organisation they would get a brochure containing an application form from their university's careers centre, at a corporate presentation during the milk round, or by phoning the organisation to request one. Whichever approach was taken, all application forms were sent to the Human Resources department located in the corporate headquarters. Every application was acknowledged with a letter. It was with these acknowledgement letters that the research questionnaire was sent to applicants. The questionnaire contained 24 items. These were the 23 items that the pilot studies reduced the OCP to, plus the item '*employees are given praise for good performance*', which subsequent analysis during the writing-up of the thesis eliminated*. This item is also eliminated in the analysis of the main study. In addition, the questionnaire asked applicants for their name (so they could be matched with the environmental values and selection outcome data), their gender, date of birth, whether or not they had had full-time or part-time work and, if so, how long they had had such work. An accompanying letter explained the purpose of the questionnaire and stated that it would not be used in any way for selection to the recruiting organisation. To reinforce this point, applicants were asked to send their completed questionnaires to the researcher at the Open University in a pre-paid, pre-addressed envelope. A copy of the questionnaire and the accompanying letter can be found in Appendix 6.

The corporation received applications from 825 different people. Of these, 621 applicants returned completed questionnaires, which is a response rate of 72.3%. There was an imbalance of applications to departments. The total number of completed questionnaires by business unit and recruiting department can be found in Table 12.1 below.

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* The analysis of the factor analysis prior to the construction of the questionnaire used in the main study did not identify the strong negative skewing of this item. This negative skewing was identified when the data was reanalysed in the writing-up of this thesis.

Table 12.1 Distribution of applicants by business unit and department

Company	Department	N
Water	Finance	9
Water	Mgt & Customer Services	36
Water	Engineering	22
IT	IT	47
Retail Electric	Finance	6
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	12
Wholesale Electric	Finance	25
Corporate Office	Human Resources	40
Telecoms	Finance	14
Telecoms	Mgt & Customer Services	13
Telecoms	Engineering	11
Telecoms	IT	41
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	23
Power Distribution	Finance	8
Power Distribution	Mgt & Customer Services	17
Power Distribution	Engineering	22
Power Distribution	Strategy & Development	26
Power Engineering	Engineering	31
Power Engineering	IT	1
Not known	Mgt & Customer Services	8
Not known	*Not known*	209

The data in Table 12.1 illustrates two problems that create difficulties for this study. First, in the late-1990s, the number of graduates seeking work in corporations was depressed when compared to the previous twenty years. This was commented upon by those running the corporation's graduate recruitment process. In the previous year, the combined number of graduate applications to these business units was about double the number received in the year of the study. In years before this, the business units had received four or five times the number of applications. A factor caused by the corporation that might have contributed to this phenomenon was that this was the first time this corporation had used a unified graduate application pack and milk round presentation. This decision reduced the impression the corporation created in careers centres by reducing the number of graduate packs from eight or nine individual graduate packs to one larger, more impressive pack. However, despite the presence of this specific factor to the corporation, the reduction in graduate applications matched the overall reduction in applications that graduate recruiters experienced across the United Kingdom (Arkin, 1999; Pearson, Perryman, Connor, Jagger & Aston, 1999; Welsh, 1999).

The second issue highlighted by the numbers in Table 12.1 is the incomplete nature of the data on applicants. The questionnaire to applicants

did not ask them to report the business unit(s) and department(s) that they were applying to for several reasons. First, the researcher was informed that this information would be readily available from the corporation. Second, it was important to keep the questionnaire to one side of A4 to improve the response rate. The questionnaire was already cramped and adding the extra questions would have been difficult. Third, all of the questions on the questionnaire could be answered without recourse to any other sources. Placing these two questions on the questionnaire might have required the applicant to refer to another source, which, in turn, might have led to questionnaires not being completed and returned. In retrospect, it would have been better to ask these two questions as the corporation was unable to supply complete application information on 217 applicants who had completed the research questionnaire in spite of assurances from the company. As a result, it was only possible to include 404 applicants (54% male, 46% female) in assessments of P–O and P–P fit.

Some 68% of applicants had had full-time work and 76% had had part-work. The mean length of time that applicants report they had been in full-time work was 21 months. The mean length of time that applicants report they had been in part-time work was 23 months. The average age of applicants was 23 years and 6 months with a standard deviation of 4 years and 5 months. The youngest applicant was 19 years and the oldest was 49 years and six months.

Capturing the values of the business units

The use of this corporation made it possible to capture the types of fit required to test the hypotheses. The multi-level pilot study suggested that employees were unable to differentiate between corporate and business unit and that one appears to substitute for the other. As already mentioned, the corporate identity of this organisation was still being established. The graduate recruitment brochure was still strongly divided by business unit and contained very little on the group. To all intents and purposes, the applicant was still applying to the individual business units. As a result of all these factors, the

corporate level of P–O fit was ignored and instead the highest level of P–O fit measured was at the business unit level.*

The values of each business unit were captured in the following way. Following the method used by Chatman (1991), the nine most senior people in each business unit were identified with the assistance of Human Resources staff and sent a questionnaire and explanatory letter (see Appendix 6). This questionnaire asked these people to use the questionnaire to report the values of their business unit. They were not asked for their own values for three reasons: (1) because these values would have no psychological meaning for the applicants, (2) because the multi-level pilot study had shown that capturing individual values at this level added little, and (3) for the practical reason that the Human Resources staff thought that some of the members of the Top Team would take exception to this task and would either not complete the questionnaires or would raise objections to the study.

Two pieces of analysis were conducted on Top Team assessments of their business unit's values. First, an alpha coefficient was calculated for each business unit to check that the Top Team members agreed on the nature of their business unit's values. These were calculated at the item level. Using a SPSS data sheet, the rows contained the 23 items and the columns contained each relevant organisational member's score for each item (i.e. inter-rater reliability calculated at the item level) as suggested by Bowman and Ambrosini (1997). Second, correlations between the value profiles of each business unit were produced. A profile of values for each business unit as viewed by the Top Team was calculated by averaging respondents' scores for each of the 23 items. This yielded a 23-item profile for each business unit. Then correlations were calculated between the value profiles of the eight business units (plus the Top Team in the corporate headquarters) to ensure that each of the business units has a profile of values that is different to the other

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* The values of one corporate headquarters department, Human Resources, and the Top Team located in the corporate headquarters, were captured. These were used to provide a set of business unit values for applicants to the Human Resources department to be measured against.

business units in the group. The results of these two checks are displayed in Table 12.2 below.

Table 12.2 *Alpha coefficients for Top Team assessments of each business units' values (in brackets) and correlations between the values of the business units (correlations greater than .42 are significant at the .05 level, and correlations greater than .55 are significant at the .01 level)*

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Water	(.91)								
2	IT	.35	(.92)							
3	Retail Electric	.61	.31	(.71)						
4	Power Stations	.46	.38	.72	(.79)					
5	Wholesale Electric	.69	.38	.85	.76	(.77)				
6	Corporate HQ	.38	.30	.60	.63	.51	(.57)			
7	Telecoms	.39	.76	.38	.60	.44	.43	(.95)		
8	Power Distribution	.69	.29	.60	.50	.74	.42	.10	(.93)	
9	Power Engineering	.71	.33	.64	.54	.61	.55	.29	.63	(.57)

The alpha coefficients suggest that in business units 1, 2, 7, and 8 there is considerable agreement amongst the Top Teams of their business unit's values. The alpha coefficients for business units 3, 4, and 5 show acceptable reliability (George & Mallery, 1995). However, the alpha coefficients for business units 6 and 9 offer poor reliability suggesting that the Top Team members do not agree on the nature of the values in these units. The poor figure for business unit 6, the top team located in the corporate headquarters, is explained due to newness of the corporate headquarters and the widely dispersed and functional variety of the Top Team members. The poor figure for business unit 9 is explained by the dual nature of this business: it contains both the engineering and the management consultancy divisions of the corporation, which is likely to divide the views of the Top Team. Moreover, at the time of the study, the six Top Team respondents were split in terms of tenure in the corporation: three had been employed less than eight years and the other three had been with the company more than seventeen years. A contact in the Human Resources team hinted that there was a 'changing of the guard' in this Top Team and considerable discussion about the direction the business unit should go in. In conclusion, business units 5 and 9 are dropped from calculations of business unit P–O fit due to the poor agreement amongst the Top Team respondents as to the nature of the values of these companies.

The correlation matrix in Table 12.2 is much as predicted with about half of the value profiles of the business units not being significantly associated and most of the rest being moderately associated. This pattern would be expected because six of these nine business units were, before privatisation, part of the same organisation. In addition, there has been some interchange of senior executives between the business units, and many of the business units are in the same industry (although at different parts of the supply chain). These correlations suggest that the nine business units have different values and are distinguishable from each other.

Capturing the values of the departments

Each of the business units had targets for the number of graduates they wished to recruit. These targets were determined by department. Although applicants sent their completed application forms to the corporate Human Resources department, applicants were asked to indicate which department in which business unit they wanted to apply to. A similar selection process design of shortlisting–first interview–assessment centre and second interview was common to all. Within each business unit, these recruiting departments were organised according to function. The departments that were hoping to recruit graduates included finance, information technology, sales and marketing, customer services, engineering, business management and strategy, and human resources, which, as already mentioned, was located in the corporate headquarters. The department heads of every recruiting department were written to with a request that at least four and preferably ten members of their department complete a questionnaire (see Appendix 6). The purpose of the study was explained and ten copies of the questionnaire, each with a covering letter for each departmental member and a reply paid envelope, were enclosed.

The questionnaire that department members were asked to complete included both assessments of the values of their department and their own values. Following the multi-level pilot study reported in Chapter 10, the prompt on the questionnaires was altered to refer to the department rather than the organisation. In addition to the two scales of values, department members

were asked for their gender, age (in broad bands), tenure in the corporation, business unit, and department, and the number of other companies they have worked for. These questionnaires were completed and returned anonymously.

As with business unit values, alpha coefficients were calculated for each department to check that the department members agreed on the nature of their department's values. In addition, alpha coefficients were calculated to check that the department members held similar values to each other. As with Top Team assessments of business unit values, these reliabilities were calculated at the item level. Also in similar fashion to the procedure used for Top Team assessments of business unit values, a profile of values was calculated for each department by averaging respondent's scores at the item level. A correlation matrix for those departments with appropriate alpha coefficients is also produced to investigate whether or not the value profiles of each department are different. The results of these two analyses are displayed in Table 12.3.

Table 12.3 Alpha coefficients and correlation matrix for (1) departmental and (2) departmental members' values

	Company	Department	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Department P–O Fit											
1	Water	Finance	5	(.83)							
2	Water	Engineering	6	.51	(.80)						
3	IT	IT	10	.51	.53	(.84)					
4	Retail	Finance	5				(.51)				
5	Power	Sales & Mark'g	4	.61	.48	.65		(.61)			
6	Wholesale	Finance	6	.74	.64	.52		.58	(.62)		
7	Corp Off	Human Resources	5	.25	.36	.26		.32	.27	(.63)	
8	Telecoms	Finance	5	.87	.74	.51		.54	.81	.27	(.84)
9	Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	4								
10	Telecoms	Engineering	5	.58	.43	.61		.68	.55	.01	.48
11	Telecoms	IT	10	.59	.53	.61		.71	.46	.23	.48
12	Telecoms	Sales & Mark'g	4	.66	.60	.63		.72	.40	.15	.60
13	Power Dist.	Finance	2								
14	Power Dist.	Mgt & Cust Servs	2								
15	Power Dist.	Engineering	6	.72	.70	.68		.66	.64	.41	.72
16	Power Dist.	Strategy & Dev	4								
				9	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**
9	Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	4	(.47)							
10	Telecoms	Engineering	5		(.77)						
11	Telecoms	IT	10		.72	(.66)					
12	Telecoms	Sales & Mark'g	4		.63	.74	(.68)				
13	Power Dist.	Finance	2					(.68)			
14	Power Dist.	Mgt & Cust Servs	2						(.42)		
15	Power Dist.	Engineering	6		.55	.75	.71			(.84)	
16	Power Dist.	Strategy & Dev	4								(.46)

Correlations greater than .42 are significant at the .05 level and those greater than .53 are significant at the .01 level.

				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Department P–P Fit											
1	Water	Finance	5	(.46)							
2	Water	Engineering	6		(.83)						
3	IT	IT	10		.91	(.92)					
4	Retail	Finance	5		.92	.87	(.88)				
5	Power	Sales & Mark'g	4		.77	.85	.72	(.71)			
6	Wholesale	Finance	6		.85	.86	.80	.74	(.63)		
7	Corp Off	Human Resources	5		.86	.87	.84	.88	.84	(.78)	
8	Telecoms	Finance	5		.93	.88	.91	.77	.86	.89	(.88)
9	Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	5		.81	.81	.79	.82	.74	.83	.85
10	Telecoms	Engineering	5		.85	.92	.84	.84	.84	.89	.85
11	Telecoms	IT	0								
12	Telecoms	Sales & Mark'g	4		.78	.79	.74	.81	.69	.86	.79
13	Power Dist.	Finance	2								
14	Power Dist.	Mgt & Cust Servs	2								
15	Power Dist.	Engineering	5		.82	.86	.85	.86	.83	.88	.85
16	Power Dist.	Strategy & Dev	4		.75	.72	.72	.63	.80	.78	.74
				9	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**
9	Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	5	(.70)							
10	Telecoms	Engineering	5	.73	(.80)						
11	Telecoms	IT	0			-					
12	Telecoms	Sales & Mark'g	4	.74	.84		(.79)				
13	Power Dist.	Finance	2					(.77)			
14	Power Dist.	Mgt & Cust Servs	2						(.13)		
15	Power Dist.	Engineering	5	.74	.88		.73			(.76)	
16	Power Dist.	Strategy & Dev	4	.64	.74		.79			.68	(.65)

All correlations are significant at the .01 level.

Table 12.3 highlights the mixed response rate from each department. Two departments did as asked and completed and returned questionnaires from ten members of staff. All but two of the other departments managed a response rate of between 40% and 60%, which is sufficient to capture an agreed set of values for the department and its members. The two departments that only managed to return questionnaires from two of their employees are dropped from the analysis as this is not sufficient to capture a robust consensus of the values (Chatman, 1988).

As mentioned during the reports of the pilot studies, the accepted rule of thumb with alpha coefficients is that scores above .70 are acceptable and above .60 are just satisfactory (George & Mallery, 1995; Nunnally, 1978). With the exception of just one department, the alpha coefficients for department members' own values all exhibit reasonable reliability. Assessments of departments' values exhibit less consensus, probably due to the amount of reorganisation that had occurred in the previous five years with

privatisation, restructuring, mergers, and acquisitions. Three of the departments have alpha coefficients below .60 and are therefore eliminated from further consideration. Those departments that were not able to supply an assessment of their values and the values of the people the departments with adequate consensus are shaded in Table 12.3 and these will not be used in the analysis of the data.

The correlation matrix also yields some interesting findings. When looking at department values, it can be seen that departments operating in the same function (e.g. finance or sales and marketing) had the highest correlations between their values. In the case of the finance departments, the correlation coefficients approach .90, which would indicate that the value profiles of the departments are the same. The correlations in the correlation matrix for department P–P fit are all above .63 and all statistically significant at the .01 level suggesting considerable homogeneity of values amongst these employees. Many of these correlation coefficients are at, or very close to, .90, which would indicate that there is no difference between the values of people in these departments (Cohen, 1977). This homogenisation of values is explained by the relatively high tenure of respondents, – there is a mean department tenure of 4.4 years (n=119, sd=5) and a mean company tenure of 7.4 years (n=128, sd=7.1) – the similar background of many staff (mainly graduates from the same part of the world), and the corporate culture. Although the values of some of these departments appear to be very similar, the pilot study that was reported in Chapter 11 demonstrated the importance of analysing fit at the department level. For this reason, in subsequent analyses the departments will be treated as separate and different entities even though in some cases there appears to be a lot of similarity between them.

Capturing the values of the applicant population

It was necessary to capture the values of the general population that applications might come from so that it would be possible to investigate whether people self-select from this pool based on their fit to the values of the organisation (and the people in it). In effect, this is a control group. As already mentioned, almost all applications to the organisation originated in career

centres in British universities. During a discussion with the person responsible for the corporation's graduate recruitment, it was explained to the researcher that eleven universities (those with either an excellence in engineering or a similar regional focus to the organisation) provide the majority of applicants. It is to these eleven universities that the corporation makes its milk round presentations. As a result, these eleven universities were selected to provide a sample of the values of the applicant population.

To gain these values, the heads of the careers service at each of these eleven universities was approached for help with the distribution of the questionnaires. All kindly accepted. The process for distributing the questionnaires was as follows. To each university careers centre, 50 copies of the questionnaire were sent. Accompanying every questionnaire was a letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaire and giving instructions and a prepaid addressed envelope for the questionnaires to be returned. The questionnaires were placed on the counter of the careers service. Careers service staff asked users of the service, i.e. people looking for work as graduate entrants, to complete a questionnaire. These questionnaires were distributed at the same time that people were applying to the organisation.

The questionnaires asked job seekers for their values in the same manner as applicants to the corporation. In addition, they were asked to report their degree course, the type of work they were looking for, their gender, date of birth, whether they have had full-time or part-time work and, if so, for how long. Printed on to every questionnaire was the name of the university to which it was sent.

In total, 550 questionnaires were distributed and 171 (31.1%) were returned completed (2 were not completed properly). There was a mixed response rate from the eleven universities. Only 4 questionnaires (8%) were returned from one university, whereas the most responsive returned 28 (56%). Amongst these questionnaires, there were 136 responses that could be categorised as looking for work in a similar type of department to those being offered by the corporation (38% male, 62% female). Some 8 people did not respond to this part of the questionnaire and 27 expressed a desire for a different type of work. These responses are displayed in Table 12.4 below.

Table 12.4 Type of work sought by people in the applicant population

Type of Work Sought	N	% of total
Finance	18	10.5%
Management & Customer Services	38	22.2%
Engineering	18	10.5%
IT	23	13.5%
Sales and Marketing	14	8.2%
Strategy and Development	12	7.0%
Human Resources	13	7.6%
Other	27	15.8%
Missing	8	4.7%

The data in Table 12.4 allows the control group to be conceived in three conceptually meaningful ways. The first is the whole population, which includes those people seeking work in vocations that are not relevant to recruiting corporation such as teachers, police officers, lawyers and doctors. The second way of conceptualising this population is to remove these people who are not seeking work in 'commercial' organisations. When analysis is being conducted department by department in the recruiting corporation, the third way of conceptualising the population is to restrict the control group to just those people seeking that type of work. This third way of conceptualising the population has a clear and specific purpose; it should be used when analysis is being conducted at the department level. However, the other two conceptualisations of the population could both be used when the analysis of fit is being conducted at the business unit level. To avoid a proliferation of analyses later in this thesis it is important to choose between them. To make this decision, the fit of each population (i.e. people who completed the questionnaire in the university careers centres who do not want to work in commercial organisations and those people in these careers centres looking for work in commercial organisations) to the values of each business was calculated and the means of the two populations were compared using t-tests. The comparison of applicant populations was also run for fit to the values of each department (P–O fit) and to the values of people in each department (P–P fit)*. The results are shown in Table 12.5 below.

* P–O and P–P fit were calculated in the same way as fit in the pilot studies using the sum of absolute differences method.

Table 12.5 *Independent samples t-tests that show differences in fit between non-applicants who want commercial work and those that do not*

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O Fit							
Water		Non-commercial	34	-30.94	6.49	-.547	.293
		Commercial	135	-30.30	5.99		
IT		Non-commercial	34	-32.97	6.59	-1.335	.092
		Commercial	135	-31.38	6.10		
Retail Electric		Non-commercial	34	-36.17	7.66	-1.359	.088
		Commercial	135	-34.44	6.34		
Power Stations		Non-commercial	34	-36.88	7.77	-1.611	.055
		Commercial	135	-34.87	6.14		
Wholesale Electric		Non-commercial	34	-35.81	8.07	-.973	.166
		Commercial	135	-34.45	7.07		
Telecoms		Non-commercial	34	-39.32	7.63	-1.485	.070
		Commercial	135	-37.40	6.53		
Power Distribution		Non-commercial	34	-31.75	6.73	-.745	.229
		Commercial	135	-30.85	6.22		
Business Unit	**Department**	**Status**	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**t**	**Sig. (1-tailed)**
Department P–O Fit							
Water	Finance	Non-commercial	34	-38.69	6.98	-1.492	.069
		Commercial	135	-36.98	5.73		
Water	Engineering	Non-commercial	34	-37.11	6.70	-.653	.257
		Commercial	135	-36.34	5.99		
IT	IT	Non-commercial	34	-34.46	6.79	-1.450	.075
		Commercial	135	-32.78	5.88		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Non-commercial	34	-35.62	7.16	-1.718	.044
		Commercial	135	-33.63	5.70		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Non-commercial	34	-36.09	6.66	-1.310	.096
		Commercial	135	-34.55	5.97		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Non-commercial	34	-28.21	6.00	-1.056	.157
		Commercial	135	-27.01	5.92		
Telecoms	Finance	Non-commercial	34	-37.92	6.77	-1.248	.107
		Commercial	135	-36.49	5.74		
Telecoms	Engineering	Non-commercial	34	-42.44	7.57	-1.493	.069
		Commercial	135	-40.65	5.84		
Telecoms	IT	Non-commercial	34	-34.94	7.14	-1.905	.030
		Commercial	135	-32.73	5.73		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Non-commercial	34	-35.53	7.13	-1.705	.045
		Commercial	135	-33.56	5.72		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Non-commercial	34	-34.70	6.35	-1.431	.077
		Commercial	135	-33.15	5.42		

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Department P–P Fit							
Water	Engineering	Non-commercial	34	-25.56	5.35	-.930	.177
		Commercial	135	-24.56	5.67		
IT	IT	Non-commercial	34	-23.57	5.75	-.721	.236
		Commercial	135	-22.79	5.64		
Retail Electric	Finance	Non-commercial	34	-26.67	5.62	-1.463	.073
		Commercial	135	-25.16	5.34		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Non-commercial	34	-26.53	5.93	-1.337	.092
		Commercial	135	-24.98	6.05		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Non-commercial	34	-26.00	5.91	-1.205	.115
		Commercial	135	-24.69	5.58		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Non-commercial	34	-25.38	5.67	-2.204	.015
		Commercial	135	-23.09	5.35		
Telecoms	Finance	Non-commercial	34	-25.24	5.40	-1.029	.153
		Commercial	135	-24.16	5.45		
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Non-commercial	34	-26.82	6.40	-1.185	.119
		Commercial	135	-25.40	6.22		
Telecoms	Engineering	Non-commercial	34	-24.72	5.51	-.977	.155
		Commercial	135	-23.69	5.46		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Non-commercial	34	-26.53	5.69	-1.155	.125
		Commercial	135	-25.21	6.02		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Non-commercial	34	-27.50	6.19	-2.339	.010
		Commercial	135	-25.07	5.21		

The results in Table 12.5 show that in every case the fit of people seeking commercial work was greater than the fit of those people seeking other forms of work. In five of the cases, the differences were significant at the .05 level or greater. These results are encouraging as they suggest that value congruence is greater the more closely aligned people's choice of organisation is. It seems inappropriate to call the people seeking non-commercial work part of the relevant applicant population. As a result, when there is a need to compare applicants to a control group representing the general applicant population, people seeking non-commercial work will be removed from the control group leaving just those people who hope to find commercial work through the university careers centres. The figures in Table 12.5 demonstrate that this makes such comparisons more demanding, but they will be more convincing if found.

Capturing selection data

As mentioned earlier, the selection procedure was fairly uniform across the business units and departments with four stages of selection: shortlisting,

first interview, some form of test or tests and/or a final interview. This data has been coded categorically in the following way:

'1' failure at the shortlisting stage

'2' failure after first interview

'3' failure after other selection tests or second interview

'4' offer of work*

This selection was conducted in each of the business units with various degrees of help from staff in the corporate office. Conversations with corporate office Human Resources staff revealed a high degree of professionalism in selection procedures. For example, everyone involved in interviewing underwent extensive training.

Staff in the corporate office's Human Resources department supplied information on selection outcomes. Unfortunately, the corporate office was not as successful at getting data from each of the business units as it hoped to be despite numerous requests for further information. This was the first time the corporation had attempted to co-ordinate graduate recruitment across all business units and naturally there were some teething trouble gathering data. The data that could be gathered is displayed in Table 12.6.

* One person was offered a job and rejected it. This person has been treated as an outlier and removed from the set.

Table 12.6 Distribution of selection data by department (for those applicants who completed a research questionnaire)

Company	Department	1	2	3	4	N
Water	Finance	6	2	1		9
Water	Mgt & Customer Services		35		1	36
Water	Engineering	21			1	22
IT	IT	18	23	4	2	47
Retail Electric	Finance		4	2		6
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	12				12
Wholesale Electric	Finance	25				25
Corporate Office	Human Resources	26	8	6		40
Telecoms	Finance		9	5		14
Telecoms	Mgt & Customer Services		9	3	1	13
Telecoms	Engineering		4	6	1	11
Telecoms	IT	18	19	4		41
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	12	11			23
Power Distribution	Finance		8			8
Power Distribution	Mgt & Customer Services		17			17
Power Distribution	Engineering		21		1	22
Power Distribution	Strategy & Development		24		2	26
Power Engineering	Engineering		18	12	1	31
Power Engineering	IT		1			1
Not known	Mgt & Customer Services	8				8
Not known	*Not known*					209

Normal distribution of the responses

Due to the concerns described earlier that the use of a normative scale to collect values would lead to skewed data, it is important to check that participants' responses are normally distributed so that parametric statistical devices might be used to analyse the data. Calculating the skewness and kurtosis statistics of every item did this check. The results of this analysis can be found in Table 12.7.

The skewness and kurtosis statistics in Table 12.7 show that participants' responses were normally distributed. As mentioned earlier, the rule of thumb with these statistics is that ±1 is excellent and ±2 is acceptable (George & Mallery, 1995). Only one of the items – '*people work long hours*' – exhibits a kurtosis figure outside these ranges. A kurtosis score of 2.882 means that the distribution is flatter than would be expected with a set of normally distributed data. This item was the least desirable value in the set. There seems to be no reason for the flatness other than the obvious explanation that this is a value on which people place different weight. As the kurtosis statistic on this

item is not extreme, i.e. ±5 (George & Mallery, 1995), it has been left in the set.

Table 12.7 Kurtosis and skewness statistics for questionnaire items

	Individual Values			Organisational Values		
Item	**N**	**Skewness**	**Kurtosis**	**N**	**Skewness**	**Kurtosis**
People are competitive	908	.186	-.230	182	-.424	.692
People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	906	-.103	-.407	182	-.533	.356
Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	908	-.914	.542	182	-.574	-.351
People try to fit in	909	-.352	-.725	181	-.447	.342
Staff pay attention to detail	909	-.467	-.610	181	-.390	.306
Managers are concerned that people are treated well	909	-1.196	1.056	182	-.553	-.005
Staff have a lot of autonomy	907	-.204	-.321	182	-.384	-.312
People have a respect for the rights of others	909	-.795	-.336	182	-.677	-.082
People work long hours	907	.961	2.882	182	-.393	-.238
Employees are very busy at work	909	.437	-.072	182	-.543	.898
People act on their own initiative	909	-.398	-.094	182	-.413	.700
Staff are precise	909	-.249	-.761	181	-.222	.177
Staff have considerable demands made of them	908	.259	-.233	181	-.921	1.064
Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	908	-.041	-.475	182	-.369	.138
People focus on profits	908	.415	-.277	182	.010	-.842
People develop friendships at work	909	-.348	-.885	182	-.572	.215
People work in collaboration with others	909	-.809	.089	182	-.714	1.399
There are opportunities for growth and development	909	-1.103	.496	181	-.424	-.144
People make quality a priority	909	-.682	-.124	181	-.348	.229
Employees take risks	909	.308	.109	182	-.027	-.574
Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	909	-.175	-.624	182	.114	-.609
Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	909	-.318	-.557	182	-.436	.355
Staff are continually being innovative	907	-.135	-.642	182	.036	-.073

Finally, the reliability of the items was checked. This could not be conducted at the individual item or the whole fit level because these are single items. Instead, the reliability of the six factors in the 23-item scale was examined in the same manner as in Chapter 9. This was conducted for the people seeking work in the university job centres, applicants, members of departments, and members of the top teams. The results are displayed in Table 12.8 below.

Table 12.8 Reliability analysis of the six factors

Alpha coefficients	Organisational Values	Individual Values
People in Job Centres		
Personal initiative	-	.62
People orientation	-	.66
Attention to detail	-	.71
Demands made of staff	-	.59
Collegiality	-	.60
Competitiveness	-	.58
Applicants		
Personal initiative	-	.61
People orientation	-	.67
Attention to detail	-	.69
Demands made of staff	-	.63
Collegiality	-	.53
Competitiveness	-	.50
Department Members		
Personal initiative	.72	.75
People orientation	.68	.62
Attention to detail	.79	.71
Demands made of staff	.72	.70
Collegiality	.63	.64
Competitiveness	.60	.60
Top Team Members		
Personal initiative	.87	-
People orientation	.80	-
Attention to detail	.77	-
Demands made of staff	.76	-
Collegiality	.63	-
Competitiveness	.66	-

The alpha coefficients for organisational values are all above the guideline of .60 (George & Mallery, 1995; Nunnally, 1978) for acceptable reliability. However, some of the alpha coefficients for individual values do not reach this standard; attention is drawn to the factors 'collegiality' and 'competitiveness'. Although the alpha coefficients for department members' values are around the .60 standard, people in job centres and applicants are

not. There are many possible explanations for this occurrence, not least the lack of reliability of these factors. Other explanations include the possible unfamiliarity of graduates with organisational environments (Bradby, 1990; Fournier & Payne, 1994; Nicholson & Arnold, 1989, 1991) and the possible impression management of applicants (Kristof-Brown, Barrick & Franke, 2002). A case could be made for dropping the six items making up these two factors for subsequent analysis based on these weak reliability scores. However, that approach is rejected here because (1) the alpha coefficients for people in the job centres and department members only just miss the standard, (2) P–O and P–P fit are hypothesised to be a complex multi-dimensional constructs, (3) fit is calculated on an item by item basis rather than a factor by factor basis, and (4) the pilot studies indicated that the 23-item measure of P–O and P–P fit was effective.

CHAPTER 13

RESULTS

Attraction hypotheses

At the end of Chapter 6, two working hypotheses were proposed that captured the key research questions related to the main attraction proposition in Schneider's ASA cycle. To recap, these two working hypotheses were as follows:

1a *The value congruence between applicants and the organisation will be greater than the value congruence between people in the control group and the organisation.*

1b *The value congruence between applicants and the employees of the recruiting organisation will be greater than the value congruence between people in the control group and the employees of the recruiting organisation.*

The first of these hypotheses tests Schneider's attraction proposition in terms of P–O fit and the second tests it in terms of P–P fit. These hypotheses explore the key idea that organisations will attract applications from the people in the relevant applicant population (i.e. those with suitable knowledge, skills, abilities and other attributes; KSAOs) whose values are most like those of recruiting organisations. However, this is just part of the picture as these hypotheses offer a comparative indicator of fit. By comparing the fit of applicants to people in the control group there is no test of whether applicants actually possess the values of the organisations. They could be a better fit than people in the control group, but they might not actually share recruiting organisations' values. For example, the people in the control group might not place any value on working in a competitive environment, whereas applicants

might have a moderate interest in doing so. However, employees might regard the recruiting organisation as one that is highly competitive. In such a situation, the applicants would be a better fit than the control group but would not actually share the values of the organisation. Alternatively, although applicants might fit the recruiting organisations better, it might be the case that both applicants and people in the control group share recruiting organisations' values well. Using the previous example, it might be that people in the control group and applicants both value working in competitive environments. Hence, before considering whether applicants fit better than people in the control group, it is important to see whether or not applicants actually share the values of recruiting organisations (and their employees).

Schneider proposes that organisations attract applicants who share their values. Comparing the fit of applicants to the fit of employees tests this proposition. This test requires a series of calculations. First, the fit of applicants to the business units and departments (P–O fit and P–P fit) to which they applied must be calculated. These scores are then averaged so that there is a mean fit score for applicants for each business unit and department. Second, an average fit score is also calculated for all employees in each business unit or department. Third, the two means are compared using a independent-samples t-test. If applicants' mean fit scores are equal (i.e. not significantly different) or greater (i.e. stronger fit) to those of employees, then applicants might be said to share the values of the recruiting organisation. The results of this analysis can be found in Table 13.1. A one-tailed significance figure is reported because the differences in mean fit scores were important if significant in one direction: i.e. if applicants have less fit than employees do.

Table 13.1 *Independent samples t-tests that show differences in fit between applicants and employees (excluding members of the Top Team)*

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O Fit							
Water		Applicants	66	-31.00	6.12	-1.933	.029
		Employees	12	-27.28	6.21		
IT		Applicants	47	-30.75	5.95	-2.145	.018
		Employees	16	-27.29	4.27		
Retail Electric		Applicants	6	-33.85	4.73	-.274	.394
		Employees	10	-32.95	7.14		
Power Stations		Applicants	12	-31.24	5.22	.200	.422
		Employees	23	-31.66	6.23		
Wholesale Electric		Applicants	25	-34.10	5.93	-.788	.218
		Employees	18	-32.62	6.26		
Telecoms		Applicants	102	-37.20	6.87	.430	.334
		Employees	19	-37.95	7.37		
Power Distribution		Applicants	73	-30.64	5.65	-.941	.275
		Employees	13	-29.04	5.61		
Department P–O Fit							
Water	Finance	Applicants	9	-35.02	5.23	-1.437	.088
		Employees	5	-30.60	6.04		
Water	Engineering	Applicants	21	-37.71	6.13	-1.290	.105
		Employees	6	-33.90	7.34		
IT	IT	Applicants	47	-33.06	6.04	-1.329	.095
		Employees	10	-30.36	4.60		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Applicants	12	-28.29	4.72	1.379	.095
		Employees	4	-31.88	3.57		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Applicants	25	-33.85	3.66	-1.462	.077
		Employees	6	-31.22	5.11		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Applicants	39	-26.84	5.23	-1.559	.064
		Employees	5	-23.04	4.06		
Telecoms	Finance	Applicants	14	-36.01	5.35	.252	.402
		Employees	5	-36.72	5.45		
Telecoms	Engineering	Applicants	11	-42.51	2.79	-1.115	.142
		Employees	5	-39.80	7.18		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Applicants	23	-30.35	5.61	-1.285	.106
		Employees	4	-26.50	4.88		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Applicants	22	-33.51	6.12	-.591	.280
		Employees	5	-31.82	3.23		

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Department P–P Fit*							
Water	Engineering	Applicants	21	-23.54	6.31	-2.258	.017
		Employees	6	-17.51	2.70		
IT	IT	Applicants	47	-22.79	4.89	-2.483	.008
		Employees	10	-18.66	4.08		
Retail Electric	Finance	Applicants	6	-23.53	5.56	-2.836	.010
		Employees	5	-16.08	1.95		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Applicants	12	-21.75	3.98	-1.987	.034
		Employees	4	-17.38	3.12		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Applicants	25	-22.67	3.67	-1.462	.077
		Employees	6	-21.01	4.70		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Applicants	39	-21.94	4.85	-1.559	.064
		Employees	5	-16.80	3.87		
Telecoms	Finance	Applicants	14	-23.59	7.46	-1.709	.053
		Employees	5	-17.68	2.51		
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Applicants	13	-23.97	4.84	-2.551	.011
		Employees	5	-17.76	3.92		
Telecoms	Engineering	Applicants	11	-22.85	5.41	-1.426	.088
		Employees	5	-18.88	4.52		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Applicants	23	-23.25	4.23	-4.115	.000
		Employees	4	-13.50	5.33		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Applicants	22	-25.47	5.42	-1.638	.057
		Employees	5	-21.22	4.11		

The results in Table 13.1 differ with each type of fit. With business unit P–O fit, the results are mixed. Applicants to two of the business units (Water and IT) exhibit significantly weaker fit scores and therefore can be said not to share the values of these business units. Applicants to three of the other business units (Retail Electric, Wholesale Electric, and Power Distribution) have a weaker fit, but the difference is not statistically significant at the .05 level. Applicants to the two other business units (Power Stations and Telecoms) have fit scores that are very similar to those of employees. Overall there is a sense that applicants have a slightly weaker fit than employees, but the data is far from convincing either way.

Analysis at the department level is hindered by low sample sizes, as there are ten or fewer organisational respondents for every department. Nevertheless, the results for department P–O fit do suggest a pattern. In eight of the ten departments, applicants' fit was lower than employees' fit. But these results were not statistically significant. Given the lack of statistical significance of a difference, it might be argued that this is evidence to suggest

* The P–P fit of employees was calculated individually taking out the employees' own values from the second 'P' to remove the potential confound.

that the applicants share the values of employees. However, several factors suggest that this would be a false conclusion to draw. The first of these factors is the fact that eight of the ten cases are situations in which applicants' fit is lower than employees' fit is. The second factor concerns the absolute size of the differences in means. Although these were not significant, and therefore care must be taken not to read too much into the results, the magnitude of the differences (approximately 10%) is large. Third, the low sample size means that differences have to be much larger to establish significance. As a consequence of these factors, it seems wise not to read too much into these results on department P–O fit primarily due to the poor sample size.

The same sample size problem occurs with department P–P fit. However, in this case, the differences between applicants' fit and employees' fit are so great that in six of the eleven departments the results are significant at the .05 level, and the significance levels of the remaining five departments just miss this standard (i.e. significant at $p < .10$). From these results it is possible to draw the conclusion that applicants do not share the values of the employees in the departments in which they wish to work.

Looking at the results as a whole, the sense conveyed is that applicants do not fit to the same extent as employees do. In the case of department P–P fit, the results demonstrate this to be the case. In the case of department P–O fit, the results appear to lack the sample size to demonstrate the effect. And in the case of business unit P–O fit, the results offer a complex picture with a suggestion that applicants' fit is weaker than employees' fit is. Perhaps these results are what should be expected given Schneider's propositions and subsequent studies. Chatman (1991), for example, found a socialisation effect with newcomers becoming a better fit during their first year. The pilot study that was reported in Chapter 10 also found a similar socialisation effect. If applicants were a good fit on application then there would be little scope for this subsequent socialisation. Therefore, this analysis switches to look for an attraction effect within the applicant population: i.e. by comparing applicants' fit with that of the people in the control groups. To make this analysis easier to follow, it is subdivided into separate sections for the three types of fit captured in the study (business unit P–O fit, department P–O fit, and department P–P fit).

Business unit P–O fit

The previous tests demonstrated that applicants do not share the values of the business units, departments and employees. The next group of tests considers whether or not applicants have a better fit than the control group. The first test of this type compared the business unit P–O fit of applicants and people in the control group (i.e. all those people who completed questionnaires in the university careers centres filtered so that only those people who want work in commercial organisations are included). This test is conducted business unit by business unit so that only relevant applicants are included in the calculations. An example will help to clarify. Take the Water business unit, first a mean score for each of the 23 items in the instrument is calculated from Top Team members' assessments of the business unit's values. These mean item scores are used as the 'O' variables used to calculate fit. Then, P–O fit scores are calculated for applicants to the Water business unit and also for the people in the control group. A mean for each group was calculated and these were compared using an independent samples t-test. The hypothesis – *that the business unit P–O fit of applicants should be greater than the business unit P–O fit of people in the control group* – would be supported if those people who applied to the Water business unit have a stronger fit than the people in the general population and if the difference between the two means is significant. This is then repeated for the other six other business units (as mentioned in the previous chapter, the Corporate Office and the Power Engineering business units were removed from this investigation due to the poor reliabilities of their Top Team's assessments of these business unit's values). The results of independent samples t-tests are displayed in Table 13.2 overleaf. As before, a one-tailed significance figure is reported because the differences in mean fit scores were hypothesised as being in one direction.

Table 13.2 *Comparison of business unit P–O fit for applicants to the business unit against the control group, which has been filtered to remove people in the control group who are not interested in finding commercial work*

Business Unit	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Water	Control group	135	-30.30	5.99	.774	.220
	Applicants	66	-31.00	6.12		
IT	Control group	135	-31.38	6.10	-.615	.270
	Applicants	47	-30.75	5.95		
Retail Electric	Control group	135	-34.44	6.34	-.224	.412
	Applicants	6	-33.85	4.73		
Power Stations	Control group	135	-34.87	6.14	-1.982	.025
	Applicants	12	-31.24	5.22		
Wholesale Electric	Control group	135	-34.45	7.07	-.239	.406
	Applicants	25	-34.10	5.93		
Telecoms	Control group	135	-37.40	6.53	-.223	.412
	Applicants	102	-37.20	6.87		
Power Distribution	Control group	135	-30.85	6.22	-.235	.407
	Applicants	73	-30.64	5.65		

The figures in Table 13.2 show that although the mean fit of applicants was stronger than the mean fit of the control group in six of the seven business units, in only one business unit was the difference significant at the .05 level. Although the differences between the mean fits of the two constituencies are weak, they might still be larger than they should be. The reason for suggesting this is that the fit calculations displayed in Table 13.2 might contain an element of person–vocation fit (P–V fit). This is possible because there is an imbalance in the type of work (i.e. vocation) sought by the people in the two constituencies. To eliminate potential contamination by P–V fit, the same analysis was run again, but this time it was conducted department by department and only those people in the control group wanting the type of work of the department were included. This should leave just firm-specific fit. The results are displayed in Table 13.3.

Table 13.3 Comparison of business unit P–O fit for applicants to each department against people in the control group who want similar work

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Water	Finance	Control group	18	-30.57	6.45	-1.008	.162
		Applicants	9	-28.11	4.83		
Water	Mgt & Cust Servs	Control group	38	-31.22	7.17	.463	.323
		Applicants	36	-31.93	5.99		
Water	Engineering	Control group	18	-28.96	5.18	.870	.195
		Applicants	21	-30.64	6.64		
IT	IT	Control group	22	-32.89	5.50	-1.423	.080
		Applicants	47	-30.75	5.95		
Retail Electric	Finance	Control group	18	-34.85	5.85	-.378	.355
		Applicants	6	-33.85	4.73		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Control group	14	-31.68	3.98	-.244	.410
		Applicants	12	-31.24	5.22		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Control group	18	-34.94	6.90	-.431	.334
		Applicants	25	-34.10	5.93		
Telecoms	Finance	Control group	18	-38.44	6.20	-.906	.186
		Applicants	14	-36.29	7.28		
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Control group	38	-37.38	6.67	-.629	.266
		Applicants	13	-36.04	6.57		
Telecoms	Engineering	Control group	18	-36.72	5.61	1.228	.115
		Applicants	11	-39.00	3.15		
Telecoms	IT	Control group	22	-38.70	6.30	-.174	.432
		Applicants	41	-38.39	7.10		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Control group	14	-33.21	5.78	.947	.175
		Applicants	23	-35.43	7.51		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Control group	18	-29.40	4.99	1.279	.110
		Applicants	22	-31.58	5.64		
Power Distribution	Strategy & Dev.	Control group	12	-32.96	7.90	-1.250	.110
		Applicants	26	-30.20	5.47		

The results displayed in Table 13.3 control for applicants' choice of work: for example, it compares the business P–O fit of applicants wanting work as accountants, say, to the same fit of people in the control group wanting to work in finance and related fields. In nine of the fourteen cases, applicants' fit is greater than non-applicants' fit, although none of these differences are statistically significant. In the remaining, five cases, non-applicants' fit is greater than applicants' fit, although, yet again, none of these differences are statistically significant. Overall, the results broadly balance out and the hypothesis is rejected. In short, these results do not support the idea that applicants have a better business unit P–O fit than non-applicants once P–V fit is controlled for.

Department P–O fit

To recap briefly: department P–O fit calculates the fit of people to the values of the department as described by members of the department. This is calculated department by department and the results are displayed in Table 13.4 below.

Table 13.4 Comparison of department P–O fit for applicants to the department against the control group, which has been filtered to remove people in the control group who are not interested in finding commercial work

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Water	Finance	Control group	135	-36.98	5.72	-.996	.161
		Applicants	9	-35.02	5.23		
Water	Engineering	Control group	135	-36.34	5.99	.972	.167
		Applicants	21	-37.71	6.13		
IT	IT	Control group	135	-32.78	5.88	.281	.390
		Applicants	47	-33.06	6.04		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Control group	135	-33.63	5.70	-3.147	.001
		Applicants	12	-28.29	4.72		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Control group	135	-34.55	5.97	-.570	.285
		Applicants	25	-33.85	3.66		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Control group	135	-27.01	5.92	-.165	.435
		Applicants	39	-26.84	5.23		
Telecoms	Finance	Control group	135	-36.49	5.74	-.297	.384
		Applicants	14	-36.01	5.34		
Telecoms	Engineering	Control group	135	-40.65	5.84	1.042	.150
		Applicants	11	-42.51	2.79		
Telecoms	IT	Control group	135	-32.73	5.73	.096	.462
		Applicants	41	-32.83	5.92		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Control group	135	-33.56	5.72	-2.497	.007
		Applicants	23	-30.35	5.61		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Control group	135	-33.15	5.43	.281	.390
		Applicants	22	-33.51	6.12		

The pattern of results displayed in Table 13.4 is not dissimilar to the patterns of results for business P–O fit. Generally the results show that there is a small, but statistically non-significant, effect in the predicted direction present for the departments. Only the three engineering departments contradicted this pattern with small, but statistically non-significant, effects in the opposite direction. The two sales and marketing departments were the only departments that supported the hypothesis with statistically significant results. It is interesting that the departments clustered according to type, which suggests that something is going on that requires further explanation. To

produce this, P–V fit was controlled for in the same way as it was for the analysis presented in Table 13.3. In the results presented in Table 13.5 the department P–O fit of applicants is compared to the same fit of people in the control group who want similar work.

Table 13.5 Comparison of department P–O fit for applicants to the department against people in the control group who want a similar type of work

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Water	Finance	Control group	18	-37.92	5.33	-1.340	.096
		Applicants	9	-35.02	5.23		
Water	Engineering	Control group	18	-34.45	4.99	1.803	.040
		Applicants	21	-37.71	6.13		
IT	IT	Control group	22	-33.98	4.86	-.628	.262
		Applicants	47	-33.06	6.04		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Control group	14	-29.96	4.74	-.899	.189
		Applicants	12	-28.29	4.72		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Control group	18	-35.13	5.66	-.902	.181
		Applicants	25	-33.85	3.66		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Control group	13	-24.80	5.86	1.180	.122
		Applicants	39	-26.84	5.23		
Telecoms	Finance	Control group	18	-36.99	5.84	-.486	.316
		Applicants	14	-36.01	5.34		
Telecoms	Engineering	Control group	18	-40.83	4.89	1.034	.155
		Applicants	11	-42.51	2.79		
Telecoms	IT	Control group	22	-34.10	4.83	-.864	.196
		Applicants	41	-32.83	5.92		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Control group	14	-29.46	4.11	.511	.307
		Applicants	23	-30.35	5.61		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Control group	18	-31.88	3.92	.975	.168
		Applicants	22	-33.51	6.12		

Table 13.5 shows that just one of the eleven t-tests has a result at the $p<.05$ level and that is not in the hypothesised direction. This analysis is particularly interesting because it shows that when P–V fit is controlled for, no attraction effect for department P–O fit can be found with this data set.

Department P–P fit

To recap, P–P fit captures the degree of fit between a person's values and a group of other people's values. In this case, it captures the fit between the values of applicants (and people in the control group) and the values of people who work in each of the departments. As explained in Chapter 7, this type of fit more closely aligns with Schneider original idea that organisations

attract similar types of people than does P–O fit: i.e. it compares people to people rather than people to perceptions of an environment.

The same analyses were conducted for department P–P fit as were conducted for department P–O fit above, with different groupings of people for the comparison group. These analyses start with a comparison of departmental applicants' P–P fit to the P–P fit of people in the control group who want commercial work (Table 13.6) and then to just those people who want a similar type of work (Table 13.7). As with the final test of department P–O fit above, this final test removes P–V fit and isolates firm-specific fit.

Table 13.6 Comparison of department P–P fit for applicants to the department against the control group, which has been filtered to remove people in the control group who are not interested in finding commercial work

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Water	Engineering	Control group	135	-24.56	5.67	-.761	.224
		Applicants	21	-23.54	6.31		
IT	IT	Control group	135	-22.79	5.64	-.002	.499
		Applicants	47	-22.79	4.89		
Retail Electric	Finance	Control group	135	-25.16	5.34	-.727	.234
		Applicants	6	-23.53	5.56		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Control group	135	-24.98	6.05	-1.814	.036
		Applicants	12	-21.75	3.98		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Control group	135	-24.69	5.58	-1.740	.042
		Applicants	25	-22.67	3.67		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Control group	135	-23.09	5.35	-1.198	.117
		Applicants	39	-21.94	4.85		
Telecoms	Finance	Control group	135	-24.16	5.45	-.363	.369
		Applicants	14	-23.59	7.46		
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Control group	135	-25.40	6.22	-.806	.211
		Applicants	13	-23.97	4.84		
Telecoms	Engineering	Control group	135	-23.69	5.46	-.489	.313
		Applicants	11	-22.85	5.41		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Control group	135	-25.21	6.02	-1.497	.068
		Applicants	23	-23.25	4.23		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Control group	135	-25.07	5.21	.331	.372
		Applicants	22	-25.47	5.40		

The results displayed in Table 13.6 show that, in all but one of the cases, applicants' P–P fit was greater than control group members' P–P fit. In two of the eleven cases, the differences in mean P–P fit were significant at the .05 level or greater. As in the case of department P–O fit, there is weak evidence here to establish that some effect is influencing the results. To

understand these results further, P–V fit was controlled for in the same way that it was with department P–O fit.

Table 13.7 Comparison of department P–P fit for applicants to the department against people in the control group who want a similar type of work

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Water	Engineering	Control group	18	-23.66	3.62	-.074	.471
		Applicants	21	-23.54	6.31		
IT	IT	Control group	22	-24.28	4.23	-1.234	.111
		Applicants	47	-22.79	4.89		
Retail Electric	Finance	Control group	18	-23.77	6.18	-.082	.468
		Applicants	6	-23.53	5.56		
Power Stations	Sales & Marketing	Control group	14	-22.68	5.81	-.467	.323
		Applicants	12	-21.75	3.98		
Wholesale Electric	Finance	Control group	18	-24.71	5.94	-1.388	.087
		Applicants	25	-22.67	3.67		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Control group	13	-21.17	3.04	.539	.298
		Applicants	39	-21.94	4.85		
Telecoms	Finance	Control group	18	-23.48	5.41	.047	.481
		Applicants	14	-23.59	7.46		
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Control group	38	-27.26	7.37	-1.497	.071
		Applicants	13	-23.97	4.84		
Telecoms	Engineering	Control group	18	-22.18	4.10	.382	.353
		Applicants	11	-22.85	5.41		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Control group	14	-21.71	5.89	.922	.182
		Applicants	23	-23.25	4.23		
Power Distribution	Engineering	Control group	18	-23.92	3.84	1.019	.157
		Applicants	22	-25.47	5.40		

The results displayed in Table 13.7 replicate the results found with department P–O fit as all significant differences between mean fits are lost and the differences between the mean fits cancel themselves out. These results for department P–P fit suggest that an attraction effect can be found for P–V fit in some departments, but once this is controlled for, it disappears leaving no department-specific effect.

Summary of attraction results

In this sub-section of the thesis several attraction hypotheses were tested. The first one hypothesised that applicants would share (1) the values of the organisations they were applying to join and (2) the values of people in these organisations. The results are unclear on P–O fit because, although the general direction of the findings is towards a difference with employees

exhibiting a greater fit than applicants, the differences are not always statistically significant. This is the case at both the business unit and the department levels. This means that the hypothesis that 'organisations attract applicants who share the organisations' values' is not supported. However, when P–P fit is considered the results are much clearer: applicants fit less well than employees. This finding means that the hypothesis that 'organisations attract applicants who share the values of employees' is rejected.

The second set of tests looked at whether the people who applied to the organisation are a better fit than a sample of people who were looking for similar types of work at the same time through the same process. This analysis was conducted by comparing the fit of applicants to the fit of (1) people in the control group contemporaneously seeking commercial work through university careers services and (2) people in the control group contemporaneously seeking a similar type of work through university careers services. The results of these analyses are clear: once P–V fit is controlled for, applicants do not have a better fit than the control group. Hence, it seems that the people in the control group who want work in commercial organisations make decisions on what type of work they want to do, rather than on which organisations they want to work in. In short, graduates make vocational rather than organisational choices. As a result, the data in this study reject Schneider's proposition that organisations attract people who share their values.

Selection hypotheses

One problem dogs the analysis of the selection proposition: the poor quality of the data that the corporation was able to supply. It seems that the recent acquisition of two of the business units (Water and Retail Electric), plus the splitting-up of the original utility into separate business units, created systems problems that resulted in a loss of data. Despite repeated requests for more information and offers to extract the information from databases personally, it appears that the corporation was not able to put its hands on all the information that it thought it would be able to when access was being

negotiated. Nevertheless, despite the fragmentary nature of the selection data, some meaningful analysis can be conducted.

To recap, the two working hypotheses explore Schneider's selection proposition that organisations select people who share their values. These were:

2a Person–organisation value congruence will predict applicants' performance in the selection process.

2b The value congruence between applicants and the employees of the recruiting organisation will predict applicants' performance in the selection process.

The first of these hypotheses conceptualises fit as a P–O fit relationship and the second as a P–P fit relationship. As with Schneider's attraction proposition, it is possible to test these working hypotheses in a number of different ways. Perhaps the most direct test of the proposition is to ask whether or not the people actually recruited by organisations fit well: i.e. do organisations select people who share their values (and those of their staff)? After that, each stage of the selection process can be investigated for the hypothesised effects.

The first piece of analysis looks at whether the people who were offered and accepted work at the organisation share the values of the organisation and its employees. This analysis is complicated by the fragmented nature of the data. Just ten of the twenty-three people who were offered jobs by the utility completed the research questionnaire. One of these ten people declined the offer, leaving just nine newcomers upon which there is data. Adding to the complications, earlier analysis of the reliability of organisational members' assessments of values prevents the calculation of any type of fit for one of the successful candidates and department P–O fit for two other successful candidates. In all cases, there is only data on just one or two successful candidates in each department (see Table 12.6). Given this low sample size, a comparison of fit by individual business unit or department is not meaningful. To increase sample size, a method is required that allows an overall comparison of the fit of successful candidates to the values of the recruiting business units, departments and employees. This analysis can be

done by running paired samples t-tests for the three types of fit with successful candidates' fit scores compared to the mean fit score of the appropriate reference group.

To clarify, a simple SPSS data sheet was prepared with just three columns and eight rows. In the first column, the business unit P–O fit of every successful applicant was recorded. In the second column the corresponding average P–O fit of employees in the relevant business unit was recorded creating a matched pair. In the third column, the corresponding average P–O fit of unsuccessful applicants was recorded (this column was used in the analysis reported in Tables 13.9 and 13.10). So, in the first row the business unit P–O fit of the successful applicant to the Water business unit was recorded. The corresponding entry in the second column was the average business unit P–O fit of employees in the Water business unit. In the third column was the average business unit P–O fit of unsuccessful applicants to the Water business unit. Each of the subsequent seven rows of the data sheet contained matched data for every successful applicant. This data set was replicated for department P–O and P–P fit. Table 13.8 compares the fit of successful applicants and employees (i.e. columns 1 and 2 of the data sheet) using a paired samples t-test. Subsequent tables compare the other columns.

Table 13.8 *Comparison of (1) the business unit P–O fit of successful candidates to the mean business unit P–O fit of the employees with whom they will work, (2) the department P–O fit of successful candidates to the mean department P–O fit of employees in the departments that the successful candidates will work, and (3) the department P–P fit of successful candidates to the mean department P–P fit of employees in the departments that the successful candidates will work*

Type of Fit	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit	Successful applicants	8	-31.74	5.32	-.749	.239
	Matched employees	8	-30.61	4.60		
Department P–O fit	Successful applicants	5	-35.03	3.91	-1.465	.109
	Matched employees	5	-33.25	3.94		
Department P–P fit	Successful applicants	6	-19.35	4.38	-.741	.246
	Matched employees	6	-18.28	1.76		

As the results in Table 13.8 indicate that there is no significant difference between the mean fit scores of successful applicants and the

relevant matched groupings of employees, it might be inferred that successful applicants share the values of the recruiting business units, departments and employees. However, two factors warn against the drawing of this conclusion. The first of these factors is the direction of differences. In all three cases, the successful applicants have a poorer fit than employees and the size of the differences, although not statistically significant, is relatively large. The second factor is the small sample size. Despite efforts to combine results across business units and departments, the sample size remains small and this prevents all but the largest differences reaching a level of significance. These two factors mean that the conclusion – that successful applicants share the values of recruiting organisations and their employees – is far from convincing.

An alternative, if less direct, way to test the hypothesis is to turn the question around: do organisations reject people who do not share their values and the values of their staff? The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 13.9 below.

Table 13.9 Comparison of (1) the business unit P–O fit of unsuccessful candidates to the mean business unit P–O fit of the employees with whom they would have liked to work, (2) the department P–O fit of unsuccessful candidates to the mean department P–O fit of employees in the departments that the unsuccessful candidates would liked to have worked, and (3) the department P–P fit of unsuccessful candidates to the mean department P–P fit of employees in the departments that the unsuccessful candidates would liked to have worked

Type of Fit	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit	Unsuccessful applicants	8	-32.43	3.31	2.720	.015
	Matched employees	8	-30.61	4.60		
Department P–O fit	Unsuccessful applicants	5	-36.04	4.25	7.344	.001
	Matched employees	5	-33.25	3.94		
Department P–P fit	Unsuccessful applicants	6	-23.86	1.11	8.920	.001
	Matched employees	6	-18.28	1.76		

The results in Table 13.9 make interesting reading as they show that this organisation rejects applicants who do not share their values or the values of their staff. When the type of fit is business unit P–O fit the difference is significant at the .05 level. When the type of fit is department P–O or P–P fit,

the significance increases to .001, which is quite persuasive even with the low sample size. However, these findings do not mean that the organisation selects people who do share their values, just that they reject people who do not share their values. A comparison of the fit of successful and unsuccessful applicants confuses the picture even further as the P–O fit of unsuccessful applicants was not significantly different to successful applicants, although their P–P fit was (see Table 13.10).

Table 13.10 Comparison of (1) the business unit P–O fit of unsuccessful and successful candidates, (2) the department P–O fit of unsuccessful and successful candidates, and (3) the department P–P fit of unsuccessful and successful candidates

Type of Fit	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit	Unsuccessful applicants	8	-32.43	3.31	.451	.333
	Successful applicants	8	-31.74	5.32		
Department P–O fit	Unsuccessful applicants	5	-36.04	4.25	.704	.260
	Successful applicants	5	-35.03	3.91		
Department P–P fit	Unsuccessful applicants	6	-23.86	1.11	2.407	.031
	Successful applicants	6	-19.35	4.38		

Reviewing the results from these three tests (employees vs. successful candidates, employees vs. unsuccessful candidates, successful vs. unsuccessful candidates) suggests that there is some evidence to support the hypothesis that successful applicants share the values of employees of the organisation. The data that suggests this is (1) the lack of a difference between employees and successful candidates on P–P fit, (2) a significant difference between employees and unsuccessful candidates, and (3) a significant difference between successful and unsuccessful candidates in the hypothesised direction. Only the relatively low sample size prevents this conclusion being more strongly advocated.

When attention shifts to P–O fit, the results are more difficult to interpret. As with P–P fit, unsuccessful candidates do have a significantly different P–O fit to employees. But successful candidates are not significantly different to either unsuccessful candidates or employees. As a result it is not possible to say whether or not they share the values of employees.

These results suggest that there might be a selection effect. To investigate this further, a correlation using Spearman's rho was calculated

between selection outcome (i.e. selected vs. not selected) and applicants' three types of fits (business unit P–O fit, department P–O fit, and department P–P fit). A Spearman's rho was used, rather than a Pearson product-moment correlation, because the data that forms the selection outcome variable is ordinal and Spearman's rho is designed for situations when either one or both of the variables are ordinal. The results are displayed in Table 13.11 below.

Table 13.11 Correlation of selection outcome (selected vs. not selected) with the three different types of fit

Type of Fit	Status	N	RHO	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit	Applicants	331	.027	.310
Department P–O fit	Applicants	264	-.059	.169
Department P–P fit	Applicants	233	.115	.040

The data in Table 13.11 suggest a small relationship for department P–P fit and selection outcome (selected vs. not selected), but no relationship between business unit and department P–O fits and a similar selection outcome. To explore this further, the selection outcome was changed so that rather than looking at selected vs. not selected, it captured progress through the selection process*. The results are displayed in Table 13.12.

Table 13.12 Correlation of selection outcome (how far applicants got in the process) with the three different types of fit

Type of Fit	Status	N	RHO	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit	Applicants	331	-.041	.228
Department P–O fit	Applicants	264	-.110	.038
Department P–P fit	Applicants	233	.033	.311

The data in Table 13.12 shows that there is no relationship between business unit P–O fit and selection outcomes or between department P–P fit and selection outcome. The data does suggest a small negative relationship between department P–O fit and selection outcome although it is in the opposite direction to the hypothesis.

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* 1 = Rejected at initial sifting of application forms; 2 = Rejected after first interview; 3 = Rejected after second interview and assessment centre; 4 = Successful applicant.

It is generally accepted that once univariate procedures have highlighted the need for deeper analysis, multivariate statistics can be used to explore the data further (Bryman & Cramer, 1990). For example, a factor analysis is run after a correlation matrix has shown there are relationships between the variables that require explanation. Running complex statistical techniques when the simpler techniques have failed to show that the data is worthy of it turns the analysis into a fishing trip and creates doubt as to whether the results have any meaning given the absence of supporting results with simpler tests. However, this is not the case with this data as the univariate tests have produced some findings that require further analysis.

Table 12.6 in the previous chapter demonstrates the fragmentary nature of the selection data. As a result, it is not possible to use 2-way ANOVA to explore these relationships, as it requires a minimum cell size of 3; an alternative is required. A suitable method that can explore the different influence of the three types of fit simultaneously is discriminant analysis. Prior to running this analysis, some preliminary recoding and tests are required. Due to the small number of people in the 'offered jobs' category for each company and department, the selection outcome was recoded with the people offered jobs being added to those people who attended the second stage of selection. This results in three categories of selection outcomes:

(1) those applicants not asked to attend an interview,

(2) those applicants rejected after a first interview, and

(3) those applicants getting through the first interview and attending the second stage of the selection process (this group includes those applicants ultimately offered jobs).

The means and standard deviations of these categories are reported by type of fit in Table 13.13.

Table 13.13 Means and standard deviations of fit by selection outcome and type of fit

Selection Outcome	Business Unit P–O fit			Department P–O fit			Department P–P fit		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
Applicants not interviewed	111	-32.96	6.39	137	-32.12	6.12	113	-23.18	5.04
Interviewed applicants not progressing	186	-32.74	6.75	97	-33.10	6.76	89	-23.19	5.14
Applicants reaching the second stage	33	-35.51	7.93	30	-34.50	7.16	31	-22.42	5.13
TOTAL	330	-33.09	6.79	264	-32.75	6.50	233	-23.08	5.08

The data in Table 13.13 is very interesting as it suggests that applicants with *weaker* P–O fit (both business unit and department) get further in the process, especially at the first interview. However, applicants with *higher* P–P fit are more successful at the interview. To investigate whether or not the differences in fit between those successful and unsuccessful at the first interview are significant, independent-samples t-tests were run. The results are reported in Table 13.14.

Table 13.14 Comparison of (1) the business unit P–O fit of unsuccessful and successful candidates at the first interview, (2) the department P–O fit of unsuccessful and successful candidates at the first interview, and (3) the department P–P fit of unsuccessful and successful candidates at the first interview

Type of Fit	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit	Unsuccessful interviewees	186	-32.74	6.75	2.114	.018
	Successful interviewees	33	-35.51	7.93		
Department P–O fit	Unsuccessful interviewees	97	-33.10	6.76	.978	.165
	Successful interviewees	30	-34.50	7.16		
Department P–P fit	Unsuccessful interviewees	89	-23.19	5.14	-.717	.238
	Successful interviewees	31	-22.42	5.13		

The results in Table 13.14 indicate that only the difference in means for business unit P–O fit is significantly different meaning that these interviewers selected applicants with *poorer* business unit P–O fit than those they rejected. In summary, these univariate tests provide data that suggest that there is something going on. But the results are very unclear. There are findings that indicate that P–O fit works in reverse with applicants with poorer fit getting selected. There are also findings to suggest that applicants with higher P–P fit get selected.

The main function of discriminant analysis is to predict membership to two (two-group discriminant analysis) or more (multiple discriminant

analysis) mutually exclusive groups. It works by analysing existing data so that a formula that maximally differentiates between the groups is arrived at. Most uses of discriminant analyses are to develop a formula to predict the group membership of new data (George & Mallery, 1995), but it is also useful in explaining effects and influences in multivariate data sets. Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998) state that discriminant analysis can also be used for '(1) determining whether statistically significant differences exist between the average score profiles on a set of variables for two (or more) a priori defined groups' and '(2) determining which of the independent variables account the most for the differences in the average score profiles of the two or more groups' (p. 256). These are the reasons for using discriminant analysis with the present data: it is (1) to determine whether the three types of fit exhibit statistically significant effects on selection outcomes, and (2) to derive a formula that captures how the three types of fit combine to predict membership of different categories of selection outcome (i.e. straight reject, reject after a first interview, progress to the second stage). In doing so, discriminant analysis reveals how fit predicts selection outcomes, if indeed it does. With three selection outcomes, multiple discriminant analysis is required for the current data set, rather than two-group discriminant analysis.

Table 13.15 contains the results of the multiple discriminant analysis with progress through the selection process (three stages – not shortlisted, rejected after interview, progress to second interview) as the dependent variable and the three types of fit (business unit P–O fit, department P–O fit, and department P–P fit) as the independent variables. The means, standard deviations, and number of cases of these variables were reported in Table 13.13. The multiple discriminant analysis yielded two canonical discriminant functions. The first function accounted for 98.3% of the variance and has a canonical correlation of .218 ($p < .01$). The second function accounted for the remaining 1.7% of variance and has a canonical correlation of .029 (p = n.s.). Hence, the first function dominates the analysis and the non significance of the canonical correlation of the second function (with selection outcome) means that it can be ignored (Field, 2000).

Table 13.15 Multiple discriminant analysis of selection outcome by type of fit

	% of variance	Canonical correlation
Function 1	98.3	.218 ($p < .01$)
Function 2	1.7	.029 ($p = .44$)

Factor matrix	Function 1	Function 2
Business unit P–O fit	.533	.810*
Department P–O fit	.881*	.144
Department P–P fit	-.116*	.086

* largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function

Variables	Unstandardised discriminant function coefficient	Unstandardised discriminant function coefficient
Business unit P–O fit	-.024	.210
Department P–O fit	.118	-.134
Department P–P fit	-.095	.007
(Constant)	3.404	2.536

Variables	Standardised discriminant function coefficient	Standardised discriminant function coefficient
Business unit P–O fit	-.154	1.377
Department P–O fit	1.163	-.828
Department P–P fit	-.491	.037

The unstandardised coefficients are important because they are used with raw scores to produce a function score for applicants. However, they do not give a good guide to the relative importance of the variables because the means and standard deviations of the P–O fit and P–P fit scores do differ markedly (with the method of calculation used in the present study, P–O fit scores are about 50% larger than P–P fit scores). To obtain a guide to the relative importance of the factors, the standardised coefficients have to be considered. These show that the most powerful predictor of selection outcome in this sample is department P–O fit, which is more than twice as important as department P–P fit and more than seven times more important than business unit P–O fit.

It is important to consider the signs of the variables. SPSS assigns signs in multiple discriminant analysis by awarding a positive sign to the largest variable. Accordingly, department P–O fit receives a positive sign in function 1. The fact that department P–P fit and business unit P–O fit have negative signs is important as these indicate an opposite effect to department P–O fit. So, whilst department P–O fit influences selection outcome in one

direction, department P–P fit and business unit P–O fit are influencing it in the opposite direction. To discover which way around the effects work, the means of the variable must be consulted. Table 13.13 shows that department P–O fit worsens through the selection process, whilst department P–P fit improves. Consequently, a positive sign for a coefficient is negatively associated with selection outcome, whilst a negative sign is positively associated with selection outcome. By reversing the signs, an equation to predict selection outcome can be derived from the multiple discriminant analysis thus:

(.095 x Dept P–P fit) + (.024 x BU P–O fit) - (.188 x Dept P–O fit) - 3.404

This equation correctly predicted 41.1% of outcomes into their original groups against a chance prediction of 33.3%. When this equation was applied to applicants in the present sample, the Spearman rho correlation of this function to the selection outcome (with the three selection outcomes as used in the multiple discriminant analysis) was .18 ($r = .18$, $p < .01$, $N = 175$). This means that this equation predicts selection outcome, but only moderately.

Within the equation are several interesting features. First, it indicates that business unit P–O fit is a very weak influence on selection decisions. The equation offers a correlation of .18 with selection outcome. Squaring the correlation of .18 produces a figure of just 3.24%, which is an indication of how much the equation explains the selection outcome. Business unit P–O fit makes up approximately 8.5% of this effect (.154 / 1.808), i.e. 0.28% of the total variance in selection outcome is accounted for by business unit P–O fit. Both department P–O and P–P fit are larger, but still very small as 96% of the total variance in selection outcome is not accounted for by this equation.

The second feature of this equation worthy of comment is the appearance of both positive and negative signs for the variables. There are positive signs for business unit P–O fit and department P–P fit and a negative sign for department P–O fit. Dropping out the business unit P–O fit due to its comparative small size, the contradictory signs mean that people are selected who fit with the values of people in the department but do not fit with the values of the department. Being careful not to assign causation and noting that the selectors were predominantly department members, in other words this

means that selectors selected people who shared their values when these people did not fit the departments' values. There are many possible explanations of this effect, but unfortunately these fall beyond the scope of this study. However, to illustrate the nature of this effect it is interested to float several speculative explanations. Perhaps these selectors are rebels recruiting like-minded rebels, perhaps the selectors feel alienation from or are antagonistic to the values of the department, perhaps the selectors are seeking out people who will fit with a new set of values, or perhaps the selectors are weeding out sycophantic applicants.

Returning to Schneider's selection propositions, these results suggest that selection is more complex than anticipated. Drawing on the t-tests and deconstructing the equation, there is evidence to support the hypothesis that P–P fit is positively associated with selection outcome, but the hypothesis that P–O fit is positively associated with selection outcome is rejected. This data set provides evidence that suggests that different types of fit interact to influence the selection outcome, but that the overall effect of P–O and P–P fit to influence selection decisions is quite weak.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted on function 1 to investigate whether or not there are significant differences between the three selection outcomes. The between-groups results ($F = 4.306$, $p = .015$, $df = 2$) demonstrate that there are statistically significant differences between the three selection outcomes. This result suggests one final piece of analysis. As the multiple discriminant analysis contained three groups, it involves two choice points: (1) whether or not applicants are offered a first interview, and (2) whether or not applicants are successful at the first interview. These two decisions are very different. Shortlisting is conducted from a desk review of applicants' application forms and covering letters. Interviewing is a face-to-face encounter between organisational representatives and applicants. The findings of Cable (1995) and Cable and Judge (1997), which show that the perceived fit between interviewer and interviewee predicted interview outcome (see Chapter 4), suggest that the interview stage will show an effect for fit. Unfortunately, there has been no work reported in the P–O fit literature on shortlisting. Given that the shortlisting involves no personal contact, it seems unlikely that shortlisting will exhibit an effect for fit. Although this

analysis could be produced from the post hoc analyses from the one-way ANOVA of the first discriminant function, there is a methodological problem. To compare those shortlisted with those not shortlisted, groups 2 (those applicants rejected after the first interview) and 3 (those applicants successful at the first interview) need to be combined; the one-way ANOVA treats them as separate categories. The simplest way around this problem is to conduct these analyses as separate tasks using t-tests. Given the fragmentary nature of the data, the comparison of shortlisted vs. not shortlisted applicants could be run for three different groups for business unit P–O fit, four different groups for department P–O fit, and three different groups for P–P fit. The results are displayed in Table 13.16.

Table 13.16 Comparisons of the mean fit scores of those applicants shortlisted and those that were not

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit							
IT	IT	Not shortlisted	18	-31.79	6.51	-.941	.352
		Shortlisted	29	-30.11	5.59		
Telecoms	IT	Not shortlisted	18	-37.78	6.51	.484	.632
		Shortlisted	23	-38.87	7.64		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Not shortlisted	12	-32.63	5.11	1.997	.060
		Shortlisted	11	-38.50	8.69		
Department P–O fit							
IT	IT	Not shortlisted	18	-32.94	5.31	.100	.922
		Shortlisted	29	-33.13	6.54		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Not shortlisted	26	-27.44	5.71	-1.019	.316
		Shortlisted	13	-25.63	4.03		
Telecoms	IT	Not shortlisted	18	-33.32	5.64	-.467	.684
		Shortlisted	23	-32.44	6.22		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Not shortlisted	12	-28.79	3.83	1.422	.170
		Shortlisted	11	-32.05	6.85		
Department P–P fit							
IT	IT	Not shortlisted	18	-24.79	6.02	-2.314	.026
		Shortlisted	29	-21.54	3.63		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Not shortlisted	26	-22.67	5.22	-1.334	.190
		Shortlisted	13	-20.49	3.79		
Telecoms	Sales & Marketing	Not shortlisted	12	-23.04	4.62	.242	.812
		Shortlisted	11	-23.48	3.96		

Just one of the ten comparisons displayed in Table 13.16 exhibits a difference at $p < .05$ and another is just above this standard. The differences are in opposite direction to each other. In the case of shortlisting in the IT company, the P–P fit of the people shortlisted was greater than the P–P fit of

those people that were not shortlisted. However, in the case of sales and marketing shortlisting in the Telecoms business unit, the business unit P–O fit of those shortlisted was significantly lower than those rejected at this stage. The process of application in both of these cases was identical and people doing the shortlisting were adhering to similar rules. As a result, the most obvious explanation of these contradictory results is that they are random occurrences and simply offset. Indeed, if a Bonferroni correction of one tenth is applied to counter the danger of Type 1 error (Hair et al, 1998), all of the results become non-significant. Consequently, the results suggest that neither P–O or P–P fit have any influence over shortlisting.

The next piece of analysis looked at whether or not fit influences the selection decisions of interviewers. This was conducted at a summary level earlier (see Table 13.14), but more detailed analysis can be offered. The following analysis compares the mean fit scores of those people who were rejected after a first interview and those people who were successful at the first interview. The results are displayed in Table 13.17.

Table 13.17 Comparisons of the mean fit scores of successful and unsuccessful applicants at the first interview

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Business Unit P–O fit							
IT	IT	Unsuccessful	23	-30.57	5.88	-.872	.592
		Successful	6	-28.33	4.24		
Telecoms	Finance	Unsuccessful	9	-33.89	5.07	1.788	.100
		Successful	5	-40.60	9.18		
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Unsuccessful	9	-33.06	3.89	3.328	.008
		Successful	4	-42.75	6.76		
Telecoms	Engineering	Unsuccessful	4	-39.25	4.79	-.189	.854
		Successful	7	-38.86	2.23		
Telecoms	IT	Unsuccessful	19	-38.71	8.24	.213	.834
		Successful	4	-39.63	4.50		
Department P–O fit							
IT	IT	Unsuccessful	23	-34.27	6.56	-1.936	.064
		Successful	6	-28.73	4.61		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Unsuccessful	8	-25.30	4.63	.361	.726
		Successful	5	-26.16	3.26		
Telecoms	Finance	Unsuccessful	9	-33.11	4.45	4.004	.001
		Successful	5	-41.24	2.64		
Telecoms	Engineering	Unsuccessful	4	-43.20	3.89	-.602	.562
		Successful	7	-42.11	2.21		
Telecoms	IT	Unsuccessful	19	-32.25	6.60	.314	.758
		Successful	4	-33.35	4.67		
Department P–P fit							
IT	IT	Unsuccessful	23	-21.88	3.81	-.990	.332
		Successful	6	-20.23	2.75		
Corporate Office	Human Resources	Unsuccessful	8	-20.05	4.04	.516	.616
		Successful	5	-21.20	3.66		
Telecoms	Finance	Unsuccessful	9	-22.62	8.01	.634	.538
		Successful	5	-25.32	6.81		
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Unsuccessful	9	-25.11	4.03	-1.314	.216
		Successful	4	-21.40	6.14		
Telecoms	Engineering	Unsuccessful	4	-20.35	3.33	1.185	.266
		Successful	7	-24.29	6.05		

Table 13.17 displays results that are quite difficult to explain, as there appear to be few patterns in the data. Taking department P–P fit first. In none of the five departments that could be measured was there any evidence to suggest that interviewers either favoured or rejected interviewees based on the interviewees' department P–P fit. Three of the five departments exhibit no effect for department P–O fit, but the other two do exhibit statistically significant effects. These two effects go in opposite direction, with the effect for interviewers in the Telecom's Finance department being very strong in favouring interviewees who do not fit the department's P–O fit well. Turning to business unit P–O fit, there is no effect for four departments, but the other

one exhibits a statistically significant effect with interviewers favouring the interviewees who fit least well.

As mentioned, these results are quite difficult to explain. Perhaps the most natural explanation is the idiosyncratic behaviour of some interviewers. In the utility, a considerable amount of effort was given to the training of interviewers and all interviewers are known to have been through the training. However, attending the training does not necessarily mean that all idiosyncrasies are removed and it might be the case that the significant effects capture the behaviour of idiosyncratic interviewers rather than anything else.

These results leave a crucial question unanswered: as the earlier analyses in this chapter showed that the business units recruited people who shared the values of employees, but subsequent analysis showed this does not happen at the shortlisting or first interview stage, at what point do the business units make this selection for P–P fit? The natural next place to look is a comparison of success and failure at the third stage of selection: the second interview and the assessment centres. Unfortunately, analysis of this stage of selection is limited by the fragmentary nature of the selection data, principally the fact that departments just recruited one or two graduates and the missing data on which applicants reached particular stages of the process. However, some descriptive data can be supplied on the three departments where it was possible to compare successful people at the third stage of selection with those who were unsuccessful. These are displayed in Table 13.18 below.

Table 13.18 Mean fit scores of successful and unsuccessful applicants at the second interview and assessment centre by department

Business Unit	Department	Status	N	Mean	SD
Department Unit P–P fit					
IT	IT	Unsuccessful	4	-19.50	3.13
		Successful	2	-21.70	1.41
Telecoms	Mgt & Cust Servs	Unsuccessful	3	-24.00	4.00
		Successful	1	-13.60	-
Telecoms	Engineering	Unsuccessful	6	-25.13	6.15
		Successful	1	-19.20	-

Clearly, the poor sample size makes it impossible to draw any firm conclusions from these data. That said, the size of the difference in the fit scores in the Telecoms business unit does hint that when selectors have more

time to 'get to know' the applicants (i.e. two full days at the assessment centre and a second long interview), the people who fit best are picked out and offered jobs. To analyse this possible effect further, an overall comparison of successful and unsuccessful applicants' P–P fit at this stage of selection was conducted. The results appear in Table 13.19.

Table 13.19 Comparisons of the mean fit scores of successful and unsuccessful applicants at the second interview and assessment centre

Status	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
Department P–P Fit					
Unsuccessful	25	-23.16	5.09	-1.685	.052
Successful	6	-19.35	4.38		

The t-test reported in Table 13.19 shows that there is a marginally statistically significant difference in P–P fit ($t = -1.685$, $p < .06$) between those people offered jobs and those people unsuccessful at the final stage of selection. Interestingly, two of the six people offered jobs had the highest degree of fit of the 31 applicants reaching this stage of selection and three of the other four were in the top half of the distribution. These findings lead to the conclusion that it is in this third and final stage of selection, which is characterised by greater face-to-face contact between applicants and selectors, that people get selected for their P–P fit. Some caution is warranted with this conclusion however, as it assumes that P–P fit in one department is broadly similar to P–P fit in another department. In addition, the finding that the two people with the highest degree of P–P fit of the people getting to this stage of selection were offered jobs and the four others were closer to the mean suggests that there are influences on these selection decisions that were not captured and require further investigation. Nevertheless, it seems most likely that it is at this final stage of the selection process that selection decisions are influenced by applicants' level of P–P fit.

Summary of selection results

Unlike the attraction results, which produced clear cut data rejecting Schneider's proposition, the selection results are much more difficult to

interpret. There is evidence suggesting that the applicants that this corporation rejected did not share its values. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that the people who were employed shared the values of existing employees (P–P fit). However, it was not possible to ascertain, one way or the other, whether or not the new recruits shared the values of the organisation (P–O fit).

It was possible to investigate whether or not fit predicted selection outcome. Analysis of this question produced intriguing results. Discriminant analysis suggests that business unit P–O fit has only a very small effect on selection outcome, but that department P–O and P–P fit interact to predict selection outcome. What is intriguing is the finding that in the present study these two types of fit have opposite signs. Department P–O fit is the stronger of the two influences, but it is a negative association meaning that applicants with poorer department P–O fit are more likely to be successful. The interaction with department P–P fit means that those applicants with the best fit with the values of employees are more likely to get further through the process than other applicants. However, this effect is quite small. When this formula is used to calculate applicants' selection outcome, the correlation with selection outcome is .18, which represents only a moderate relationship.

This relationship was explored further by examining the two selection decisions (shortlisted vs. not shortlisted and interview reject vs. interview success) covered by the equation. The results show that the three types of fit studied do not influence shortlisting decisions. There are some significant effects on interview decisions on business unit and department P–O fit, but not P–P fit. There does not appear to be any pattern to the effects for P–O fit and so the most likely explanation appears to be the idiosyncrasies of some of the interviewers.

Finally, further analysis investigated the third stage of selection – second interview and the assessment centre – to discover where in the process people get selected due to their P–P fit (as earlier findings showed this was the case, but no effects were found in the first two stages of selection). Although the data is fragmentary and extreme caution must be taken with the results, it does appear that P–P fit affects selection decisions in the third and final stage of selection, where there is most face-to-face contact.

CHAPTER 14

CONCLUSION

The main study reported in this thesis investigated Schneider's propositions that organisations attract and select people who share their values. Schneider argues that these two effects combine with an attrition effect to produce homogeneity in the workforce in each organisation. Studies have considered the attrition phase (e.g. Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) and looked at the overall effect (e.g. Jordan et al, 1991; Schneider et al, 1998) and found support for Schneider's framework. However, there are no published studies that have directly tested Schneider's attraction and selection propositions that organisations attract and select people who share their values. The present study considered these two propositions.

Attraction

The first series of tests focused on the attraction proposition. They compared the fit of applicants against the fit of employees business unit by business unit and department by department. These tests demonstrated that, in almost every case, the fit of applicants was weaker than the fit of employees. This result accepted the null hypothesis that applicants would have a weaker fit than employees and therefore rejects Schneider's proposition that organisations attract people who share their values. A second series of tests were conducted that compared applicants to the general population from which they emerged (i.e. eleven university careers services from which the majority of applicants to the utility come). This is an interesting analysis because although the first series of tests demonstrated that the studied organisations did not attract people who shared their values, there might still be an attraction effect with applicants better sharing the values of the

organisation than people who may not have applied. No effects could be found at the business unit P–O fit level (i.e. using Top Team members' assessment of their business units' values to calculate fit). However, initial results at the department level suggested that there was an effect in the two sales and marketing departments. It was possible to refine the general population (i.e. the control group) to include just those people seeking a similar type of work, so that applicants to the sales and marketing departments could be compared to people seeking work in sales or marketing. Once this control was put in place, all of the department effects disappeared leading to the conclusion that there was no attraction effect present with this sample. Interestingly though, it does suggest that an effect for P–V fit was present. These results provide no evidence whatsoever to support Schneider's proposition of a firm-specific effect in the attraction phase of organisational entry. Indeed, the null hypothesis is fully accepted (applicants did not share the values of the recruiting organisations and departments and applicants were no better fitted than relevant non-applicants were), which means that Schneider's attraction proposition is rejected.

The researcher was able to talk to the heads of four of the university careers centres during the data-gathering period to discuss graduates' approach to application. Generally speaking, graduates decide which types of jobs they want to do and then apply for all relevant openings that seem attractive (usually judged on starting salary and location), especially when application is allowed by standard application form. For example, someone decides that he or she wishes to train as an accountant within industry and then applies to all those organisations offering such training. He or she might exclude all those companies offering less than £20,000 starting salary that are not located in the south east of England. The heads of the university career centres quoted examples from all manner of professions and jobs to support this approach. Such an approach to job search has been widely reported in the literature (e.g. Herriot, 1984; Keenan, 1997; Rynes et al, 1997). As one careers centre head put it, "we're called careers centres or services, not companies centres". Not surprisingly, therefore, the data accords with applicants' behaviour and reveals the vocational effect, but no organisation-specific effect.

Returning to Schneider's original paper, it is interesting to note that he offers very little to support the notion of a firm-specific attraction effect. As mentioned in Chapter 3, his main justification for advocating a firm-specific attraction effect is the vocational choice literature. He quotes Holland (1976, p. 533) thus, "Vocational choice is assumed to be the result of a person's type, or patterning of types *and* the environment" (Schneider, 1987, p. 441). Schneider concludes by suggesting that "the career environments people join are similar to the people who join them" (p. 441). Schneider extrapolates from the findings of Holland (1976, 1985), Tom (1971) and Owens (Neiner & Owens, 1985; Owens & Schoenfeldt, 1979) to posit that people will be attracted to "organisations of a particular sort" (p. 442) in the same way that they are attracted to vocations and jobs. By conducting the present study in a large organisation with functional departments, it was possible both to observe this vocational choice effect and to control for it. Once controlled for, there was no firm-specific effect: people are attracted to work in a sales and marketing department because it is a sales and marketing department, not because the company is particularly attractive to them. The findings of the present study show that Schneider's extrapolation from the vocational choice literature is inappropriate for the respondents in the present study.

Schneider's attraction hypothesis is so intuitive and compelling that it is interesting to discuss whether or not there are reasons why the present study might not have found the effect, when, in many other cases, it might be present (a form of Type II error). Perhaps the most obvious study-specific constraint is the choice to study graduates entering work. Such an environment is compelling to the recruitment and selection researcher as it is one of the few planned opportunities to study organisational entry with the volumes required to produce statistical significance (Rynes et al, 1997). In addition, procedures for graduate entry tend to adhere to the principles of rigorous personnel selection, which informs the dominant selection paradigm (Schmitt & Chan, 1998). The allure of graduate entry is so powerful that it dominates the P–O fit literature (Rynes et al, 1997). The influential studies of Rynes and Gerhart (1990), Chatman (1991), Cable and Judge (1996, 1997), and Kristof-Brown (2000) all considered graduates or 'milk round' recruiters. Given the findings of the present study (i.e. that attraction is to the vocation not the organisation),

the focus on graduates seems inappropriate when the study seeks to discover P–O fit influences. In the present study most of the graduates were seeking their first 'real' job. There are implications of this, which are well recorded in the literature that considers the transition of graduates into the world of work. Nicholson and Arnold (1991), for example, demonstrated that graduates entered work with unrealistic expectations. Keenan and Newton (1984, 1986) found that engineering graduates quickly became frustrated because their aspirations were not met, which was also a finding of Mabey (1986), suggesting unrealistic expectations. Arnold (1985) reports that graduates found 'the general atmosphere at work' (p. 308) the most commonly reported source of surprise. In addition, half of his graduate respondents said that 'What the people are like with whom you work' (p. 313) was a surprise to them. The overall sense of this literature is that graduates enter organisations as 'innocents abroad'. They know little of the world of work, working environments, or the employing organisations. Given the consistent finding that graduates hold unrealistic expectations, one has to wonder whether graduates are able to make objective assessments about the nature of the organisations to which they might apply.

The second study-specific factor that might account for the absence of an attraction effect is the choice of a large utility as the location of the study. Among the reasons why this was chosen was that it exemplified a 'typical' large organisation that recruits on the milk round. Graduates would almost certainly have heard of the utility's name and the names of its business units, and graduates may have been more aware of it than usual due to the news flow surrounding the privatisation of the utilities in the preceding decade. But whilst the name will have been recognisable to graduates, the corporation is largely indistinguishable from other large corporations. If Schneider was right, this would not matter; his framework, after all, does not contain any provisos or clauses limiting it to a particular type of organisation or industry (except for the enigmatic phrase 'organisations of a particular sort', (Schneider, 1987, p.442)). As a representative of the 'grey corporations' of the UK, the organisation providing the location for the present study provides a neutral reference to explore for a general attraction effect. That such an effect was not found with this corporation makes extrapolation to other 'grey corporations'

reasonably straightforward. However, it does beg the question of what sort of organisation might exhibit an attraction effect. Presumably one with strong values that are visible to the applicant population.

The last point raises a third study-specific issue. This study used an instrument that captured 23 work values. Generally speaking, these values were operationalised as items depicting the behaviour of employees following the guidance of Stackman et al (2000); i.e. as instrumental values. Such values may not, of course, correspond with the values that applicants use to make judgements about the attraction of organisations. Schneider (1987) cites the example of the YMCA as an organisation that might exhibit an attraction effect. The YMCA has a strong and visible set of values connected to religion, social welfare and support, which are linked to the particular organisation. This produces several avenues for researchers wishing to find the attraction effect. The first of these might be to take a more conceptual approach to values. By focusing on the behaviours of employees, applicants need an understanding of work within organisations, which previous studies have shown that graduates have unrealistic expectations of. Perhaps looking at the behaviour of organisations and conceptualising values at this level, although it risks the anthropomorphism trap, might be a fruitful way forward. A second avenue might be to adopt an individual approach with the researcher studying the particular values of an organisation and then measuring these values in employees, applicants, and relevant non-applicants. Such an approach has been suggested by Kristof-Brown (1997) for the capture of organisations' values. The third avenue might be to look for an alternative currency altogether. Values were used in this study as they represented a logical extension of previous work (e.g. Cable & Judge, 1997; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991) and because Schneider's own clarifications suggested that values were paramount. Perhaps, goals, personality, climate, vision or some other dimension might show up an attraction effect.

Finally, it is interesting to return to the attraction literature for an explanation of why the attraction effect might not have been found. Other than referencing the vocational choice literature, Schneider's other justification for the attraction effect is the well-demonstrated 'similarity leads to attraction' phenomenon. However, as was discussed in Chapter 3, similarity does not

stand in isolation as the reason for attraction. Other factors, such as proximity, exposure, and familiarity, all influence the ability of similarity to influence attraction. In the case of the behaviour of graduate applicants during the milk round, their exposure to recruiting organisations, other than their general life experience, is the brochure and a short presentation. The brochure for the utility in the present study was very brief with just a few sides of marketing material and a page on each business unit and the opportunities each one offered. The presentations were 'manicured' to project the organisation in the most favourable light, as was the case for most organisations' presentations on the milk round. These presentations occurred midway through the application process and so might have only had a marginal effect on enticing more applications. Hence, most applicants' exposure to the recruiting utility is likely to have been very slight. The earlier discussion on graduates' entry into work demonstrated that they have little familiarity with organisational life. And proximity is not relevant given the clustering of applicants in locations remote to the recruiting organisation.* As a result, it seems unlikely that these remote applicants can gain sufficient understanding of the recruiting organisations' values for the congruence of values to have any significant effect on their application behaviour. Not surprisingly, therefore, no attraction effect based on value congruence could be found.

This discussion prompts the question of what circumstances it might be possible to find the attraction effect. From the above, several conditions can be advanced:

1. Potential applicants must understand the nature of work and organisational behaviour.
2. The values of recruiting organisations must be visible.
3. Potential applicants must be able to assess recruiting organisations' values, which highlights, proximity, exposure and familiarity.

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* Several analyses were conducted to investigate whether people at universities closest to the recruiting organisation, or in the same region, exhibited greater fit to the organisation's values. No effects could be found.

Two environments suggest themselves. The first is the largely unresearched world of internal recruitment (Harris, 2000). In this environment, potential applicants are already employed by the recruiting organisation and therefore are likely to be fully aware of the environment to which they would like to move. They are likely to understand exactly how the environment differs to their current environment and are able to find out more about the environment by talking to colleagues to fill any holes in their knowledge. The second environment is those industries or professions where there is (1) considerable movement between a relatively small number of organisations and (2) opportunities for potential applicants to discover what work in other organisations will be like. An example of such a profession would be academics in higher education (HE). In this profession there are structural mechanisms, e.g. conferences, external examining, visiting lectureships, that give potential applicants opportunities to find out more about places that they might apply to. Moreover, such is the circulation of academic staff that potential applicants often know people who have intimate knowledge of the recruiting establishment whom they can contact to find out more. Moreover, in the HE environment, the type of work is likely to be broadly similar in most institutions. As a result, the decision to apply elsewhere is likely to be influenced to a greater extent by P–O fit and P–P fit than job moves where jobs might be expected to be very different.

Selection

Turning to Schneider's selection proposition, the study demonstrated that the people who got through the selection process and were offered jobs were, perhaps, more likely to share the values of employees (P–P fit). It was clear that those applicants not offered jobs did not share the values of the organisation (P–O fit) or its employees (P–P fit). Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine whether or not the people offered jobs with the organisation shared its values (P–O fit) at either a business unit or department level. When the analysis was conducted to explore whether or not fit predicts how far through the selection process applicants get, the results were more complex. It showed that those applicants with the best fit with the values of

employees are more likely to get further through the process. However, this effect is quite small. These results provide partial support for Schneider's selection hypothesis. It is interesting that it is P–P fit, rather than P–O fit, that is positively associated with selection outcomes and that P–O fit appears to be negatively associated with selection outcomes in some instances. This accords with Schneider's homogeneity hypothesis, which focuses attention on the similarity of people, rather than the similarity of people and business environments.

These findings appear to show that part of the reason why people are recruited is when they share the values of employees, but are a poorer fit with the department than other applicants. Such a result might occur in the following situations:

- It might be the case that some of the recruiters are rebels actively seeking out those people to join their revolution.
- Those applicants who fit the organisation's values better might come over as sycophantic (i.e. they say the right things, but do not appear to believe what they say). If they do, recruiters might prefer a 'more genuine' or 'more unaffected' type of person. Possibly recruiters perceive people who fit as people who are less realistic about the world of work.
- Perhaps some of the recruiters are 'disaffected'. As a result they seek out, or warm to, applicants sharing their values, which would include their disaffection to the organisation's values.
- Or perhaps, some of the recruiters are just poor at recruitment and selection and see people who fit poorly as people who fit well.

This is not an exhaustive list, but merely demonstrates some of the possible explanations. Unfortunately, the design of this study prevents a definitive answer from being reached. A follow-up study that replicated the result and explored the causal factors would be very informative. But perhaps

not too much should be made of the complex selection finding. The data that it is based on is fragmentary and the effect is quite small.

Like the attraction hypothesis, Schneider's selection proposition has a strong intuitive appeal to it. Hence, the finding of only a very small complex interaction effect with P–O fit being negatively associated with selection outcome requires some explanation. The key to this might be found in the work of Cable and his colleagues (Cable, 1995; Cable & DeRue, 2002; Cable & Judge, 1996, 1997; Judge & Cable, 1997; Parsons, Cable & Liden, 1999). Cable's work has focused on perceived P–O fit in the selection phase of the ASA cycle. As the name suggests, perceived fit differs from actual fit in that it is concerned with peoples' impressions and perceptions of their fit, rather than the underlying values, goals, personality and so forth, all of which influence perceptions (Parsons, et al, 1999). Usually perceived fit is captured as a generalised measure (Kristof, 1996). An example of an item from such a measure was supplied in Chapter 3.

Cable and Judge (1997) measured interviewers' perceptions of interviewees' fit, the actual P–O fit between interviewees and interviewers, and selection outcome. Difficulties with their method of capturing P–O fit were discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. Nevertheless, the correlations between these three variables are very interesting. The correlation between perceived and actual P–O fit was .23 ($p < .05$, $N = 93$), suggesting only a moderate association*. Whereas actual P–O fit was weakly associated with interviewers'

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* In Chapter 9, the association between perceived and actual P–O fit was reported thus: $r = .325$, $p < .001$, $N = 1109$. Three reasons can be offered for this association being greater than that found by Cable and Judge (1997). First, single method error in the method reported in Chapter 9 might have inflated the figure as the scales used for capturing actual and perceived fit were placed on the same questionnaire. Second, there are difficulties with Cable and Judge's research instrument, which were discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. Third, in the study reported in Chapter 9, actual P–O fit measured the fit between people's own values and their own assessment of their organisation's values. Cable and Judge (1997) compared perceived fit to an actual measure of P–O fit derived from comparing applicants' values to interviewers' values. As shown by the study reported in Chapter 11, comparing people's own values to their own assessment of environmental values is likely to accord most with people's attitudes and behaviour, which would include their perceptions of their own fit.

hiring recommendations ($r = .16$, $p < .05$, $N = 93$), perceived P–O fit was strongly associated with interviewers' hiring recommendations ($r = .64$, $p < .05$, $N = 93$). Perhaps these findings explain the intuitive appeal of Schneider's selection proposition. People know that they make selection decisions based on fit and therefore Schneider's proposition feels right. However, Cable and Judge's (1997) findings supply the explanation: interviewers do make decisions based on their perceptions of how they think applicants will fit their organisation, but the weak associations between perceived and actual P–O fit and between actual P–O fit and interview decision suggest that these perceptions of fit are only weakly associated. In other words, in selection environments, peoples' perceptions of fit are a poor guide to actual fit as assessed by these methods. Cable and DeRue (2002) argue that perceptions of fit influence choices because they are proximal to the decision; i.e. formed during the decision-making process and directly relate to that decision. Values, in contrast, take time to develop and are robust and long-lived (Chatman, 1989). They are likely to form prior to the recruitment and selection process as a consequence of other experiences (Stackman et al, 2000; Wachtel, 1977). Hence, they are likely to be distal to selection decisions and thereby exert less influence over them.

The proximal–distal distinction might also be relevant with levels of fit. In the present study, business unit P–O fit was shown to be virtually inconsequential in its effect over selection (and completely irrelevant during the attraction phase). One explanation of why this might be the case is the separation of Top Team members from the recruitment and selection process. The values used to create the profile of the business units' values came from members of each business unit's Top Team. These people only had the most fleeting interaction with applicants, if at all. By and large, selection interviewing and running assessment centres was conducted by lower and middle managers who are located in departments. Hence, it is people at the departmental level that applicants interact with and take their cue from about the values of people and the organisation. In addition, the applicants are going to be recruited to do jobs similar to those of the managers that are interviewing and assessing them. They want to assess these people to see if they fit with them and they are keen to understand how these people view the

organisational environment. And the same would be true in reverse: selectors are keen to judge how people will fit in and how they will adapt to the values of the work environment, which are viewed through the eyes of department members.

Adding to this problem is a methodological issue centring on the collection of values. When Top Team members were asked to report the values of their organisation, in effect, they were being asked to create an average or generalised view of people's work values in the organisation. Top Team members can be strategic and detached from the day-to-day operation of the organisation (Ambrosini & Bowman, 2002; Hambrick & Mason, 1984) and, as a result, they observe behaviours. In contrast, department members are, by definition, involved in the day-to-day work of the organisation and thereby intimately exposed to, familiar with, and proximal to work values. Their assessments of work values are likely to be grounded in the realism of actual work that they experience and interact with on a daily basis. Hence, the difference between business unit and department fit might be a difference between observed and experienced work behaviours. If this is the case, then the work values produced by Top Team members might be less relevant to applicants.

There is one way in which selection is very different to the other phases of the ASA cycle. Primarily, but not exclusively, selection is carried out by organisations (cf. Herriot 1989a, 1989b; Wanous, 1992). Organisations choose whom to employ. This is how Schneider refers to selection in his papers (Schneider, 1987; Schneider et al, 1995). The other two phases place more emphasis on the decisions of the individual – whether to apply and whether to stick around – although clearly the organisation does play some role in these processes. All three processes involve interactions, but the emphasis in selection is different. This is an important consideration because whereas individuals' behaviour in recruitment, selection and continuance decisions is largely free from legal constraint (except in some contractual situations), organisational behaviour is tightly constrained, especially in the selection domain. As mentioned earlier, most countries now have legislation protecting groups that have historically been disadvantaged during selection.

For example, in the UK there is legislation to protect genders, races and people with disabilities from unfair discrimination.

In addition to the legal constraints placed on organisational selectors, there appears to be much greater professionalism in organisational selection and greater knowledge about research findings (Robertson & Makin, 1986; Shackleton & Newell, 1991, 1994). Although the interview still dominates selection, other forms of selection are more commonplace (increased usage of psychometrics and assessment centres) and the rigour of the interview itself has been tightened with the emergence of more structure and behavioural and situational questions.

These two dimensions – legal constraints and greater professionalism and knowledge – have contributed to the greater prevalence of selector training (Henley & Bawtree, 1993). The idea of 'recruiting for fit' (i.e. fit to the organisation) is regarded by many as a 'bit dodgy', possibly a relic of unstructured interviews, and tantamount to unfair discrimination (Harris, 2000). Hence, much selection training centres on avoiding unfair discrimination with a focus on matching people to the knowledge, skills, and other abilities required to perform the job tasks (Schmitt & Chan, 1998). In such an environment, it might be expected that organisational selectors would curb their desire to select people whom they believe will fit the organisation thereby reducing the strength of any selection effect in the ASA cycle.

ASA

Although the results of this study cast doubt on some aspects of Schneider's ASA framework, the results can be seen as an endorsement to its general tone. Schneider argued that "The people make the place" (Schneider, 1987, p. 451). In doing so he was keen to stress that what matters to people in terms of their "attitudes, feelings, experiences, meanings, and behaviours" (Schneider, 1987, p. 451) during the phases of recruitment, selection and employment are their interactions with other people; not interactions with the "*signs* of their existence in the organisation" (Schneider, 1987, p. 451) such as structures, processes and technology. The results of the present study demonstrated that when there was little or no interaction between people all

effects of fit disappeared. This phenomenon occurred during the remote application process when it was discovered that people who fitted the corporation were no more likely to apply than those people who fitted it less well. It also occurred during the shortlisting process when recruiters sifted application forms prior to meeting the applicants. The results showed that fit did not affect shortlisting outcomes in any way whatsoever. Only when applicants had the opportunity to come face-to-face with recruiters did fit effects begin to emerge. And, interestingly, the most pronounced selection effects were that the corporation recruited people who shared the values of existing employees and rejected those people who did not share the same values. In contrast, the results for P–O fit were much more equivocal. According to the results of the present study, therefore, it does appear that individuals' interaction with other people is crucial in shaping behaviours during organisational entry, not their interaction with the signs of human presence.

In addition to establishing that the results of the present study endorse the general tone of Schneider's ASA framework, it is possible to refine the framework in the light of these results. The present study demonstrated that it was not enough to say that "similarity leads to attraction" as it was demonstrated that similarity did not lead to attraction. The discussion highlighted two reasons for this phenomenon. First, these applicants were concerned with vocational choice, not organisational choice. People chose to apply to this organisation because the employer had vacancies in particular types of work; i.e. there was no firm-specific element to applicants' choosing. Second, the applicants in this study were remote with little opportunity to assess the values of the recruiting organisation. Drawing from the interpersonal attraction literature, these people did not have proximity, exposure and familiarity to the recruiting organisation, which are viewed as necessary precursors for the similarity leads to attraction effect. From these two issues, two attraction propositions can be advanced:

1. *Applicants must have made, have embarked on, and be settled upon their choice of vocation before an organisation-specific attraction effect can appear.*

2. *Applicants must have proximity, exposure, and familiarity with the recruiting organisation's values for value congruence to influence attraction.*

The findings regarding the selection phase of the organisational entry process demonstrated that although the effect for actual fit was quite small, the applicants who were selected shared the values of people *in* the recruiting department. In addition, the applicants rejected did not share these same values. It was less clear whether or not the recruited people shared the values *of* the recruiting department or business unit. However, the effects of actual fit were small especially when compared to reports of perceived fit (i.e. Cable & Judge 1997). The results also showed that actual fit only influenced selection decisions when there was interaction between applicants and selectors. Finally, the results demonstrated that measuring actual fit at a departmental level was more predictive of selection decisions than capturing fit at a business unit level. From these selection findings, the ASA framework can be further refined:

3. *Organisations recruit people who share the values of people in the organisation, but not necessarily the values of the organisation.*
4. *There must be face-to-face interaction between applicants and recruiters for actual P–P fit to influence the selection decisions.*
5. *The greater the volume and the better the quality of interaction between applicants and recruiters, the more likely actual P–P fit will influence selection decisions.*
6. *Actual fit should be calculated at levels relevant to the individual, which might not be at an organisational level.*

The effect of these six refinements is to reduce the universality of Schneider's ASA framework. The attraction refinements, in particular, confine the applicability of the framework to some specific situations; namely, internal recruitment and companies and industries that have values that are visible and assessable by potential applicants. In other situations it appears that the

attraction phase of organisational entry may not influence the homogeneity of workforces. Accordingly, except for the specific situations described above, what Schneider originally envisaged as the attraction–selection–attrition (ASA) cycle would lose nothing in terms of creating organisational workforce homogeneity if it became the selection–attrition (SA) cycle.

Research implications

Earlier in this chapter, six refinements to Schneider's ASA were developed. Each of these refinements are propositions that should be tested to validate the conclusions of the present study. The first two relate to the attraction phase of organisational entry. The first proposition states, '*Applicants must have made, have embarked on, and be settled upon their choice of vocation before an organisation-specific attraction effect can appear*'. Perhaps the ideal way to test this proposition is to study applicants' fit to a vacancy that attracts both people that have made and are settled on their vocational choice and people who have not. In addition, the fit of people in a suitable control group should be captured, so that comparative differences in fit can be explored. Possible examples of suitable venues for such a study could be journalists, bus drivers, police officers, school secretaries, personnel assistants, fast food restaurant management and supermarket management. The last two seem particularly interesting as graduates looking for their first job commonly compete against school leavers with several years of experience in the industry who are looking to progress.

The second proposition states, '*Applicants must have proximity, exposure, and familiarity with the recruiting organisation's values for value congruence to influence attraction*'. Perhaps the most natural way to test this proposition is to compare the fit of internal and external applicants to a vacancy. Testing this proposition requires the measurement of proximity, exposure and familiarity. The social network analysis literature contains many tools and techniques for capturing location within social systems (e.g. Brass, 1995; Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994; Krackhardt & Brass, 1994; Scott, 1991). These seem highly appropriate, especially given the present study's finding

that P–P fit might be more relevant than P–O fit in terms of predicting organisational entry outcomes.

The four remaining propositions refer to the selection phase of organisational entry. The first of these – '*Organisations recruit people who share the values of people in the organisation, but not necessarily the values of the organisation*' – is a call for a replication of the present study. It would be interesting to explore this proposition with an applicant pool of just internal applicants, possibly utilising social network analysis (see above), to reveal the apparent tension between P–P fit and P–O fit. In addition, the proposition could be explored with workers who are settled into their vocations or careers. This would remove the potential confounds of the naivete of graduate applicants and possible problems caused to selectors due to the applicants' entry to work (e.g. interviewers select for potential, maturity, or base their decisions on non work-related data). In such studies, it would be informative also to measure the fit of the people that applicants come into contact with during the organisational entry process and to measure perceptions of fit (both P–P and P–O fit). Such studies would help to unite the actual and perceived fields of P–P and P–O fit and resolve some of the unanswered questions, such as how the two forms of fit combine or interact to influence selection decisions. If these studies could also capture the amount and quality of interaction between applicants and organisational members, the fourth and fifth of the propositions would also be addressed – '*There must be face-to-face interaction between applicants and recruiters for actual P–P fit to influence the selection decisions*' and '*The greater the volume and the better the quality of interaction between applicants and recruiters, the more likely actual P–P fit will influence selection decisions*'.

The final proposition – '*Actual fit should be calculated at levels relevant to the individual, which might not be at an organisational level*' – is a call for the use of social network analysis to explore actual fit. Magnusson and Endler (1977; see Chapter 1) argued that actual behaviour is a function of a continuous process of multidirectional interaction or feedback between the individuals and the situations they encounter. It follows that values held at levels or by people that individuals do not experience will not influence their actions. In the present study the boundaries of the business unit and

department were used for convenience; they appeared the most relevant conceptualisations of working environments. However, they are quite arbitrary and there might be other ways of conceptualising the work situation that better accord with people's experience of work. Calculating the fit of people to a more relevant grouping of people, possibly weighting the reference group for the impact of particular people or values, might produce a more accurate guide to the power of fit to shape behaviours.

Managerial implications

The present study has remained neutral on Schneider's fears (Schneider, 1987, Schneider et al, 1995, 1998, 2000) that greater homogeneity of workforces leads to organisational dysfunction. It has simply explored whether or not two of the phases in the proposed ASA cycle contribute towards the hypothesised homogeneity. Consequently, no views can be offered on whether or not it is right for organisations to recruit and select for fit. However, some ideas can be offered to those organisations that have decided that they do, or do not, wish to do so.

The first managerial implication that emerges from this study is the ineffectiveness of recruitment interventions to alter the value profile of applicants. The recruiting organisation had expressed a desire to communicate their corporate values during the attraction phase. Accordingly, they designed their brochure to feature the values they wished to promote – achievement, excellence, growth, employee-friendly personnel policies, community involvement – and reiterated these values in milk round presentations at the universities that they expected to attract most people from. Despite these efforts, the profile of applicants was unaltered and did not differ from the general population from which applicants came. There are many ways to interpret this finding (perhaps the corporation were ineffective in their efforts, perhaps applicants can see through the 'hype' of brochures and presentations, or perhaps applicants are 'blind' to the messages), but the most likely explanation seems to be that potential applicants knew little of the recruiting organisation and applied to it because it offered the type of work they desired. If so, the natural managerial implication is that efforts by organisations to

attract applicants with particular values are likely to be fruitless unless considerable effort – i.e. much more than demonstrated by the company in the present study – is put into the exercise.

The corporation that supplied the site for the main study wanted to recruit people who shared their values. When asked about what sort of values selectors were looking for evidence of, the Human Resources staff talked about energy, motivation, a willingness to take on responsibilities, and other interpersonal characteristics that might be suitable criteria for any organisation recruiting graduates. No firm-specific elements were described. The Human Resources staff informed the researcher that it was their view that selection had to be objective, criterion-based, and evidence-based. This approach was delivered during the extensive training of interviewers and people running assessment centres. Overall the impression given was of a professional approach to selection that represented best practice. It is interesting to note that, despite the organisation's rigorous approach to selection, it did recruit people who shared the values of people in the organisation and rejected those who did not. There was no effect evident at the largely impersonal shortlisting stage, but there was at the face-to-face interviewing and assessment centres stages. As a result, the advice offered to people wishing to select for fit is to increase the opportunities for face-to-face interaction between applicants and selectors. The opposite would be true for people not wishing to select for fit. This advice matches the advice of Bowen et al (1991; see Chapter 4 for a detailed review). These researchers surveyed the recruitment and selection actions of three organisations that wished to select for P–O fit. The approach of these three organisations was to increase the amount of time applicants spent in contact with organisational members. In the case of Toyota, this would be in the region of 18 hours for successful applicants. Given the deep-seated nature of values and the subtle ways that values influence behaviour (Chatman, 1989; Stackman et al 2000), such lengthy exposure seems necessary before meaningful assessments of applicants' and organisations' values can be made.

Perhaps the greatest surprise in the results of the present study is the finding that P–P fit, rather than P–O fit, influenced selection decisions in a positive way. This seems important because the fit that influences selection

decisions is between people's values, not between applicants' values and the values of the organisation. Unfortunately the values of interviewers and other people involved in the selection process were not identifiable in the present study, although they are likely to have been included in the sample of people from each recruiting department. As a result, it is just a short inferential leap to suggest that the P–P fit between applicant and selector would predict selection outcome. If further research demonstrates that the actual P–P fit between applicants and selectors predicts selection outcomes, and Cable and Judge (1997) have already demonstrated that the perceived fit between interviewers and interviewees is predictive of selection outcomes, then organisations would be advised to select their selectors very carefully.

There is a danger that the above two points on actual fit and selection outcomes might be overplayed as actual fit was shown to have just a small influence over selection decisions. As noted earlier, this is in marked contrast to the findings of Cable and his colleagues (Cable, 1995; Cable & Judge, 1996, 1997; Judge & Cable, 1997) who have found that perceived fit exerts a much stronger influence over selection decisions. The comparison of these findings suggests that the selection domain is one dominated by quickly formed, short-lived perceptions (Cable and DeRue, 2002). In the pilot study reported in Chapter 9, the correlation between actual and perceived fit appears to be quite weak, which replicates Cable and Judge's (1997) finding. This finding should serve as a warning to selectors that their subjective perceptions of fit might not be grounded in actual value congruence.

Limitations

This study has several shortcomings that should be acknowledged. One limitation is the concentration on values and the conceptualisation of these at the instrumental or operational level. This approach was justified by Schneider's own writings (Schneider et al, 1998) that posited that values are the most important factor in organisational member homogeneity and by Schwartz (1994) and Stackman et al (2000) who argued that values should be conceptualised in terms that respondents can understand and identify with. However, when Schneider (1987) talks about the differences between working

in a bank and the YMCA, there are hints that he is conceptualising values at a higher level. In addition, it might not be values that influence fit. Other things, such as goals or personality, might be the key factor, or values might work in combination with other factors to influence attraction and selection. This study concentrated on values as the literature (e.g. Chatman, 1989, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Schneider, 1987; Schneider et al, 1995, 1998) suggested they are the most likely currency of fit. In doing so, this study was able to suggest that values are not a powerful influence on the attraction of applicants to organisations.

The second limitation is the fragmentary nature of the data relating to the selection phase of organisational entry. Table 12.6 in Chapter 12 illustrated that it was not possible to assess the selection outcome of about one third of applicants. This was exacerbated as the missing data came in chunks. For example, the Telecoms business unit was not able to identify the people that they did not shortlist for vacancies in their finance, customer services and engineering departments. Hence, it was not possible to review shortlisting in these departments. This sort of problem occurred across the business units and it is a major reason for caution to be expressed with the selection findings.

The third limitation relates to the 'sharp' design of the research questions. These concentrated on value congruence between applicants and organisations. As a result, perceived fit and the values of interviewers and other selectors were not collected. The work of other researchers, especially Cable and his colleagues, suggests that these would have been useful to gather as they would have helped to explain the results and to make connections to other streams of the P–O fit literature.

The fourth limitation is the single organisation nature of the main study. Although the large utility contained nine business units with fifteen different recruiting departments, it is still just one organisation. A single organisation study brings concerns about the generalisability of the findings. For example, the absence of an attraction effect might, after all, be due to failings of the organisation to convey their values effectively to the target population. Given that they chose a corporate brochure, rather than one for each business unit (although each business unit had its own page), this concern may be real. Moreover, this utility was in the midst of a great deal of corporate

restructuring. It had just acquired two new business units and had split several other units. As a result, it was a time when values were being formed and reformed and hence may not have been ideal location for a study of the role of values during recruitment and selection. That said, most of the business units were mature and there was little movement between business units or departments as a result of any corporate restructuring (except for a small number of Top Team moves). Moreover, it might be argued that the corporate restructuring this organisation has experienced was little different to other large companies at the end of the 20th century.

The final limitation concerns the study of graduates and their entry into work. Although this type of applicant is common (almost ubiquitous) in P–O fit and organisational entry research (Rynes et al, 1997), this study demonstrated that these people are more concerned with vocational choice than organisational choice. A replication of this study on applicants who have settled on their choice of vocation would be very informative.

Contributions

Despite the limitations described above, the studies reported in this thesis have made a number of contributions. These contributions include:

1. The development of a new instrument for the capture of P–O fit and P–P fit for use with large and remote populations.
2. This new instrument was tested. These tests revealed the new instrument's factor structure and demonstrated some of its psychometric properties.
3. The new instrument was used to replicate the socialisation effects originally demonstrated by Chatman (1991) and O'Reilly et al (1991).
4. Schneider's attraction proposition that organisations attract people who share their values was tested. The tests demonstrated that the proposition is not universal.
5. Schneider's selection proposition that organisations select people who share their values was tested. The

results demonstrated that this is the case for P–P fit, but not P–O fit, and showed that the selection effect for actual fit is weak.

6. In light of the findings related to Schneider's attraction and selection propositions, refinements to Schneider's ASA cycle were proposed.
7. A new research programme to explore P–O fit and P–P fit effects during the attraction and selection phases of organisational entry was described.

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APPENDIX 1

CHAPTER 7

The Organisational Culture Profile (OCP) Item Set

Flexibility	Risk taking	Being precise
Adaptability	Being careful	Being team oriented
Stability	Autonomy	Fairness
Predictability	Being rule oriented	Being people oriented
Being innovative	Being analytical	Tolerance
Being quick to take advantage of opportunities	Having high expectations for performance	Emphasising a single culture throughout the organisation
A willingness to experiment	Paying attention to detail	Sharing information freely
Respect for the individual's rights	Taking individual responsibility	Opportunities for professional growth
Informality	Being easygoing	Being calm
Being supportive	Being aggressive	Decisiveness
Action oriented	Taking initiative	Being reflective
Achievement orientation	Being demanding	Security of employment
High pay for good performance	Offers praise for good performance	Confronting conflict directly
Low level of conflict	Fitting in	Enthusiasm for the job
Developing friends at work	Not being constrained by many rules	Having a good reputation
Working in collaboration with others	Being distinctive–different from others	Having a clear guiding philosophy
Working long hours	An emphasis on quality	Being highly organised
Being socially responsible	Being results oriented	Being competitive

Source: O'Reilly et al (1991, p. 516)

APPENDIX 2

CHAPTER 8

The Reworked OCP Items

Original OCP Item	Reworked Item
Flexibility	People are flexible in their approach to work
Adaptability	Staff are continually having to change jobs or duties
Stability	Staff occupy jobs that do not change very much
Predictability	Employees can predict how others will react
Being innovative	Staff are continually being innovative
Being quick to take advantage of opportunities	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities
A willingness to experiment	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things
Respect for the individual's rights	People have respect for the rights of others
Informality	There is an informality between people at work
Being supportive	Employees are supportive of each other
Action oriented	Employees are very busy at work
Achievement orientation	People are judged by their level of achievement
High pay for good performance	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance
Low level of conflict	There is a low level of conflict
Developing friends at work	People develop friendships at work
Working in collaboration with others	People work in collaboration with others
Working long hours	People work long hours
Being socially responsible	Employees make socially responsible decisions
Risk taking	Employees take risks

Being careful	Employees are cautious
Autonomy	Staff have a lot of autonomy
Being rule oriented	People pay attention to rules
Being analytical	Staff are analytical
Having high expectations for performance	Staff are expected to perform to a high standard
Paying attention to detail	Staff pay attention to detail
Taking individual responsibility	Staff are held responsible for their own actions
Being easygoing	People are easy going
Being aggressive	People are aggressive
Taking initiative	People act on their own initiative
Being demanding	Staff have considerable demands made of them
Offers praise for good performance	Employees are given praise for good performance
Fitting in	People try to fit in
Not being constrained by many rules	People are constrained by many rules
Being distinctive–different from others	The company is distinctive and/or different to others
An emphasis on quality	People make quality a priority
Being results oriented	People focus on profits
Being precise	Staff are precise
Being team oriented	People work in teams
Fairness	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation
Being people oriented	Managers are concerned that people are treated well
Tolerance	People tolerate the mistakes of others
Emphasising a single culture throughout the organisation	Staff behave similarly in all parts of the organisation
Sharing information freely	People share information freely
Opportunities for professional growth	There are opportunities for growth and development
Being calm	People are calm
Decisiveness	People are decisive
Being reflective	Employees reflect on their actions
Security of employment	Employees have security of employment
Confronting conflict directly	Employees confront conflict directly

Enthusiasm for the job	Employees have a lot of enthusiasm for their work
Having a good reputation	The organisation has a good reputation
Having a clear guiding philosophy	Staff act in accordance with the organisation's guiding philosophy
Being highly organised	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner
Being competitive	People are competitive

APPENDIX 3

CHAPTER 9

The following pages contain the questionnaire that was given out at residential schools to a large number of managers. It was professionally printed as an A4 booklet on 80g/qm paper.

Business School

Person-Organisation Fit Questionnaire©

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is an important part of a major academic research project looking at the attitudes (people towards their organisation. It is concerned with how compatible people are with their organisatio and how this compatibility is associated with employee satisfaction and commitment. The lead researche is Jon Billsberry, Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour at the Open University.

You are under no obligation to complete this questionnaire. However, as we do not ask you to give you name **you are assured of complete anonymity**. Your answers will only be used in an aggregated forr and it will not be possible for you to be identified.

When completing the questionnaire, please assume that each question applies to the organisational un most relevant to you. If you are unemployed or retired, consider the organisation you last worked in. Ther are no right or wrong answers to the questions in this survey. What matters is that you give your hone: opinion in answering each of the questions. Remember that it is your opinion that matters, so please fill i the questionnaire by yourself. The questionnaire will take about 30 minutes to complete.

Please return the questionnaire to the person who gave it to you. If this is impractical, please return th completed questionnaire to Jon Billsberry, Centre for Human Resource and Change Management, Ope University Business School, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. (01908 655871)

Many thanks for your help.

Jon Billsberry

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SECTION 1

Please decide *how characteristic each of the following 54 items are of the organisation you work for.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most characteristic and which items are least characteristic. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns.

Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.

How characteristic of your organisation's culture are the following items?

		Very uncharac-teristic	Uncharac-teristic	Neither characteristic nor unch'teristic	Sometimes found	Characteristic	Very characteristic	A defining characteristic
1	People are flexible in their approach to work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	People work in teams	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Employees can predict how others will react	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Staff are held responsible for their own actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	There is a low level of conflict	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Staff are analytical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	People pay attention to rules	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Employees are cautious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	People are judged by their level of achievement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Staff are continually having to change jobs or duties	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	People share information freely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	People are aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	The organisation has a good reputation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	There is an informality between people at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Employees are supportive of each other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Staff behave similarly in all parts of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	People are decisive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION 1 continued

		Very uncharac-teristic	Uncharac-teristic	Neither characteristic nor unch'teristic	Sometimes found	Characteristic	Very characteristic	A defining characteristic
26	Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Employees reflect on their actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	Staff are expected to perform to a high standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	Employees have a lot of enthusiasm for their work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	Staff occupy jobs that do not change much	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	Employees have security of employment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	Employees confront conflict directly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43	People are calm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44	People are constrained by many rules	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46	The company is distinctive and/or different to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47	People tolerate the mistakes of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	Employees make socially responsible decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49	People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50	Staff act in accordance with the organisation's guiding philosophy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54	People are easy going	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please turn over

SECTION 2

Please decide *how desirable it is for each of the following 54 items to be part of the organisation you work for*. We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most desirable for you and which items are least desirable. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns.

Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.

How desirable is it for each of the following items to be part of the organisation you work for?

		Very undesirable	Undesirable	Neither desirable nor undesirable	Desirable	Very desirable	Important	Essential
1	People are flexible in their approach to work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	People work in teams	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Employees can predict how others will react	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Staff are held responsible for their own actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	There is a low level of conflict	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Staff are analytical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	People pay attention to rules	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Employees are cautious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	People are judged by their level of achievement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Staff are continually having to change jobs or duties	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	People share information freely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	People are aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	The organisation has a good reputation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	There is an informality between people at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Employees are supportive of each other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Staff behave similarly in all parts of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	People are decisive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION 2 continued

		Very undesirable	Undesirable	Neither desirable nor undesirable	Desirable	Very desirable	Important	Essential
26	Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Employees reflect on their actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	Staff are expected to perform to a high standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	Employees have a lot of enthusiasm for their work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	Staff occupy jobs that do not change much	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	Employees have security of employment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	Employees confront conflict directly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43	People are calm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44	People are constrained by many rules	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46	The company is distinctive and/or different to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47	People tolerate the mistakes of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	Employees make socially responsible decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49	People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50	Staff act in accordance with the organisation's guiding philosophy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54	People are easy going	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please turn over

SECTION 3

In this section, we look at what it means to you being a member of your organisation. Please circle one number in each row to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

		Disagree strongly	Disagree	Disagree slightly	Neutral	Agree slightly	Agree	Agree strongly
1	I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I think that people these days move from company to company too often	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	My values match those of other employees in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	My skills and abilities match those required by my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I often think of leaving this job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	It would be very hard for me to leave my company right now, even if I wanted to	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her employer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Generally speaking I am very satisfied with my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	My own values match or 'fit' with the values of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	My job performance is strengthened by my expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Jumping from firm to firm does not seem at all unethical to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	I intend to leave this organisation within the next 12 months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	I think that I could easily become as attached to another organisation as I am to this one	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave my organisation now	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this firm is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do on this job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my firm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	If I have my own way, I will not be working for this organisation three years from now	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Disagree strongly	Disagree	Disagree slightly	Neutral	Agree slightly	Agree	Agree strongly
26	I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	The "personality" of my organisation reflects my own "personality"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one's organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	Generally speaking I am very satisfied with my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	One of the few serious consequences of leaving would be the scarcity of available alternatives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	Things were better in the days when people stayed with one company for most of their careers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	I would prefer another more ideal job to the one I now have	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this firm is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice - another firm may not match the overall benefits I have here	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	I possess all the skills and abilities required to perform my job to a high standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	I have thought seriously about leaving this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	I do not think that wanting to be a 'company man' or 'company woman' is sensible anymore	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	I like the way my organisation goes about doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION 4

Biographical details

1 Are you: ❑ Male ❑ Female

2 How old are you? _____ years

3 How long have you worked with your current employer? _____ years

4 Are you: (please tick the most relevant box)

❑ Full time ❑ Part time ❑ Retired ❑ Unemployed ❑ Self-employed

5 Which of the following best describes your job? (please tick the most appropriate box)

❑ Director ❑ Senior management ❑ Middle management ❑ Junior management/supervisory

❑ Non-managerial ❑ Professional (eg lawyer, accountant, surveyor)

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR HELP AND CO-OPERATION.

APPENDIX 4

CHAPTER 10

The following pages contain the questionnaire that was given out at the start of the management course to students who volunteered to take part in the survey. It was professionally printed as an A4 booklet on 80g/qm paper.

At the second, third, and fourth data collection periods, the questionnaires were very similar. The only changes were to the front page and to section 6. In section 6 in the second, third and fourth questionnaires, questions asked participants whether or not their organisations' values had stayed the same since the start of the project and whether or not they had changed jobs. When the questionnaires were sent to participants at the second, third, and fourth data collection points, the participants' names were inserted on to the front of the questionnaires to avoid completion errors.

The questionnaires that were used at the second, third, and fourth data collection periods have not been reproduced in this document as the changes are irrelevant to the current study and to reduce the size of this document.

The Open University

Business School

Management Course Effects Questionnaire

Part 1: On Registration

INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. This is the first of four questionnaires that we shall ask you to complete over the next twelve months. Each one will be fairly similar and will take about 30 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in these questionnaires. What matters is that you give your honest opinion in answering each of them. Remember that it is your opinion that matters, so please fill in the questionnaires by yourself. When completing the question- naires, please assume that each question applies to the organisational unit most relevant to you.

We should like to reassure you of the confidentiality of your responses. Although we have to ask you to put your name on the questionnaire, so that we can see how you have changed over the study period, your answers will only be used in an aggregated form and it will not be possible for you to be identified. As a result, **you are assured of complete anonymity**.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope supplied. In case it is not possible to use the envelope, please return the completed questionnaire to Jon Billsberry, Centre for Comparative Management, Open University Business School, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. (01908 655871)

Many thanks for your help.

Jon Billsberry

Please put your name in the following box:

Name:

SECTION 1

Please decide *how characteristic each of the following 29 items are of the organisation you work for*. We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most and least characteristic. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns. *Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

How characteristic of your organisation's culture are the following items?

	Very uncharac-teristic	Uncharac-teristic	Neither characteristic nor unch'teristic	Sometimes found	Characteristic	Very characteristic	A defining characteristic
1 People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2 People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3 Staff are analytical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4 Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5 People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6 Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7 People are judged by their level of achievement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 People share information freely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9 Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10 Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11 People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12 People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13 Employees are supportive of each other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14 Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15 People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16 Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17 Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18 Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19 People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20 Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21 People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22 People pay attention to rules	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23 People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24 There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25 People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26 Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27 Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28 Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29 Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION 2

Please decide how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. Again, *please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

		Disagree strongly	Disagree	Disagree slightly	Neutral	Agree slightly	Agree	Agree strongly
1	When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	When I get what I want it's usually because I worked hard for it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I usually don't set goals because I have a hard time following through on them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I give up easily	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I am a self-reliant person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Often people get ahead just by being lucky	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I give up on things before completing them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	My major accomplishments are entirely due to my hard work and ability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Failure just makes me try harder	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	I prefer games involving some luck over games requiring pure skill	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	I feel insecure about my ability to do things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	It's pointless to keep working on something that's too difficult for me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	When I decide to do something, I go right to work on it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	I can learn almost anything if I set my mind on it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	On any sort of exam or competition I like to know how well I do relative to everyone else	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	I avoid facing difficulties	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	Competition encourages excellence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please turn over

SECTION 3

Please decide *how desirable it is for each of the following 29 items to be part of the organisation you work for.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most and least desirable for you. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns. *Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

How desirable is it for each of the following items to be part of the organisation you work for?

		Very undesirable	Undesirable	Neither desirable nor undesirable	Desirable	Very desirable	Important	Essential
1	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Staff are analytical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	People are judged by their level of achievement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	People share information freely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Employees are supportive of each other	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	People pay attention to rules	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION 4

In this section, we would like you to tell us whether you think the following words describe you. Please place a "tick" next to each adjective that you think describes you.

1	Capable	☐	16	Interests narrow	☐
2	Cautious	☐	17	Interests wide	☐
3	Clever	☐	18	Inventive	☐
4	Commonplace	☐	19	Mannerly	☐
5	Confident	☐	20	Original	☐
6	Conservative	☐	21	Phoney	☐
7	Conventional	☐	22	Reflective	☐
8	Dissatisfied	☐	23	Resourceful	☐
9	Egotistical	☐	24	Self-confident	☐
10	Honest	☐	25	Sexy	☐
11	Humorous	☐	26	Sincere	☐
12	Informal	☐	27	Snobbish	☐
13	Individualistic	☐	28	Submissive	☐
14	Insightful	☐	29	Suspicious	☐
15	Intelligent	☐	30	Unconventional	☐

SECTION 5

In this section, we look at what it means to you being a member of your organisation. Please circle one number in each row to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

		Disagree strongly	Disagree	Disagree slightly	Neutral	Agree slightly	Agree	Agree strongly
1	I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I think that people these days move from company to company too often	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	My values match those of other employees in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	My skills and abilities match those required by my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I often think of leaving this job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	It would be very hard for me to leave my company right now, even if I wanted to	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her employer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Generally speaking I am very satisfied with my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	My own values match or 'fit' with the values of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Management at my firm is sincere in its attempts to meet the workers' point of view	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Disagree strongly	Disagree	Disagree slightly	Neutral	Agree slightly	Agree	Agree strongly
15	Our firm has a poor future unless it can attract better managers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	My job performance is strengthened by my expertise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	I think my manager believes that I possess the sort of skills and abilities that the organisation needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	Jumping from firm to firm does not seem at all unethical to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	I intend to leave this organisation within the next 12 months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	If I got into difficulties at work I know my workmates would try and help me out	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Management can be trusted to make sensible decisions for the firm's future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	I think that I could easily become as attached to another organisation as I am to this one	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave my organisation now	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this firm is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do on this job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27	I can trust the people I work with to lend me a hand if I needed it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29	Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	Management at work seems to do an efficient job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my firm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	If I have my own way, I will not be working for this organisation three years from now	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	I feel quite confident that the firm will always try to treat me fairly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	Most of my workmates can be relied upon to do as they say they will do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	The "personality" of my organisation reflects my own "personality"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one's organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	Generally speaking I am very satisfied with my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	I have full confidence in the skills of my workmates	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41	Most of my fellow workers would get on with their work even if supervisors were not around	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	I possess the skills and abilities my organisation needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43	My job gives me the sort of challenge I want	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44	This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45	One of the few serious consequences of leaving would be the scarcity of available alternatives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Disagree strongly	Disagree	Disagree slightly	Neutral	Agree slightly	Agree	Agree strongly
46	I think my manager believes that my performance is excellent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47	Things were better in the days when people stayed with one company for most of their careers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	I would prefer another more ideal job to the one I now have	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50	My job gives me the sort of work I enjoy doing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51	I can rely on other workers not to make my job more difficult by careless work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52	I think my boss believes that I possess all the skills required to do my job well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53	Our management would be quite prepared to gain advantage by deceiving the workers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this firm is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice - another firm may not match the overall benefits I have here	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55	I possess the attitude towards work that my organisation values	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56	I possess all the skills and abilities required to perform my job to a high standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57	I believe that my staff think I have the skills required to do my job effectively	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58	In my job, I think I perform well above the required standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59	My organisation does not give me the sort of rewards that I need	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60	I have thought seriously about leaving this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
61	I do not think that wanting to be a 'company man' or 'company woman' is sensible anymore	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62	I like the way my organisation goes about doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION 6 - BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1 Are you: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2 How old are you? _____ years

3 How long have you worked for your current employer? _____ years

4 Are you: (please tick the most relevant box)

☐ Full time ☐ Part time ☐ Retired ☐ Unemployed ☐ Self-employed

5 Which of the following best describes your job? (please tick the most appropriate box)

☐ Director ☐ Senior management ☐ Middle management ☐ Junior management/supervisory

☐ Non-managerial ☐ Professional (e.g. lawyer, accountant, surveyor)

6 Do you: ☐ Pay your own course fees ☐ Pay part of your course fees with your firm paying the balance

☐ Have your firm pay your fees ☐ Have some (or all) or your fees repaid by your firm if you complete the course

7 Was it: ☐ Your idea to study the course, or ☐ Did someone else suggest that you study the course

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR HELP AND CO-OPERATION.

APPENDIX 5

CHAPTER 11

The questionnaire used in this pilot study was printed on a photocopier on 80 g/qm A4 in landscape aspect. It was not 'backed-up' and was stapled in the top left hand corner to keep the pages together.

Organisational Culture Profile - Human Behaviour©

This questionnaire is an important part of two academic research projects looking at the attitudes of people towards their organisation. The first research project is concerned with cross-cultural difference within the same organisation. The second research project is looking at person-organisation fit and workers' commitment to their organisation. This research is being carried out at The Open University.

You are under no obligation to complete this questionnaire. However, we do not ask you to give your name and **you are assured of complete anonymity**. Your answers will only be used for academic research purposes.

When completing the questionnaire, please assume that each question applies to the organisational unit most relevant to you, whether this is a whole organisation, single business unit, division or team. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in this survey. What does matter is that you give your honest opinion in answering each of the questions. Remember that it is your opinion that matters, so please fill in the questionnaire by yourself.

One of the outcomes of the research into person-organisation fit is the development of a tool to be used for the selection of new recruits. We are keen to see whether such a selection tool might discriminate unfairly. For this reason, we need to ask you some personal questions at the end.

Please remember that you are assured of total anonymity. To ensure that this happens, please return the completed in the attached envelope. These will not be opened until all completed questionnaires have been received by the researcher.

Many thanks for your help.

Please turn over

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Please decide *how characteristic each of the following 58 items are of the organisation you work for.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most characteristic and which items are least characteristic. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your ticks widely across the seven columns. Please ensure that you tick one, and only one, box in every row.

How characteristic are the following items of your organisation's culture?

	A defining characteristic	Very characteristic	Characteristic	Sometimes found	Neutral	Uncharac-teristic	Very uncharac-teristic
People are flexible in their approach to work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People work in teams	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is an even mix of male and female managers in the company	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees can predict how others will react	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are continually being innovative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are held responsible for their own actions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a low level of conflict	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are cautious	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are constrained by rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are analytical	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff pay attention to detail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are judged by their level of achievement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are continually having to change jobs or duties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information is freely shared within the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Everyone adopts similar behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Managers are concerned that people are treated well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff have a lot of autonomy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People have respect for the rights of others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The organisation has a good reputation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working relationships between people are informal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is an even mix of racial groups in the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People work long hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are supportive of each other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are aggressive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	A defining characteristic	Very characteristic	Characteristic	Sometimes found	Neutral	Uncharac-teristic	Very uncharac-teristic
People are decisive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are very busy at work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People act on their own initiative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees reflect on their actions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are precise	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff have considerable demands made of them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff experiment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are expected to perform to a high standard	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees have a lot of enthusiasm for their work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees have security of employment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are given praise for good performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees take risks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees confront conflict directly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People develop friendships at work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People try to fit in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People work in collaboration with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are opportunities for growth and development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are calm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are not constrained by many rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People make quality a priority	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The company is distinctive and/or different to others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People tolerate of the mistakes of others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees make socially responsible decisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People focus on profits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The organisation has a clear guiding philosophy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are competitive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff approach their work in a highly organised manner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees openly display their sexual orientation freely	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff occupy jobs that do not change much	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The composition of the workforce is typical of the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are easy going	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please decide *how important it is for each of the following 58 items to be part of the organisation you work for.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most desirable for you and which items are least desirable for you. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your ticks widely across the seven columns. Please ensure that you tick one, and only one, box in every row.

How desirable is it for each of the following items to be a part of the organisation you work for?

	Essential	Important	Very desirable	Desirable	Neutral	Undesirable	Very undesirable
People are flexible in their approach to work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People work in teams	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is an even mix of male and female managers in the company	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees can predict how others will react	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are continually being innovative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are held responsible for their own actions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a low level of conflict	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are cautious	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are constrained by rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are analytical	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff pay attention to detail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are judged by their level of achievement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are continually having to change jobs or duties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information is freely shared within the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Everyone adopts similar behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Managers are concerned that people are treated well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff have a lot of autonomy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People have respect for the rights of others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The organisation has a good reputation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working relationships between people are informal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is an even mix of racial groups in the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People work long hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are supportive of each other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are aggressive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Essential	Important	Very desirable	Desirable	Neutral	Undesirable	Very undesirable
People are decisive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are very busy at work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People act on their own initiative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees reflect on their actions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are precise	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff have considerable demands made of them	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff experiment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are expected to perform to a high standard	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees have a lot of enthusiasm for their work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees have security of employment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are given praise for good performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees take risks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees confront conflict directly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People develop friendships at work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People try to fit in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People work in collaboration with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are opportunities for growth and development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are calm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are not constrained by many rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People make quality a priority	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The company is distinctive and/or different to others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People tolerate of the mistakes of others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees make socially responsible decisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People focus on profits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The organisation has a clear guiding philosophy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are competitive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff approach their work in a highly organised manner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees openly display their sexual orientation freely	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff occupy jobs that do not change much	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The composition of the workforce is typical of the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People are easy going	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

In this section, we look at what it means to you being a member of your organisation. Please tick one box in each row to indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Agree strongly	Agree	Agree slightly	Neutral	Disagree slightly	Disagree	Disagree strongly
I am proud to be able to tell people who it is I work for	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that people these days move from company to company too often	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I sometimes feel like leaving this employment for good	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It would be very hard for me to leave my organisation right now, even if I wanted to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'm not willing to put myself out just to help the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation now	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jumping from organisation to organisation does not seem at all unethical to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Even if the firm were not doing well financially, I would be reluctant to change to another employer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that I could easily become as attached to another organisation as I am to this one	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave my organisation now	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organisation is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel myself to be part of the organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Agree strongly	Agree	Agree slightly	Neutral	Disagree slightly	Disagree	Disagree strongly
In my work I like to feel I am making some effort, not just for myself but for the organisation as well	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organisation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one's organisation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The offer of a bit more money with another employer would not seriously make me think of changing my job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organisation would be the scarcity of available alternatives	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organisation for most of their careers	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I would not recommend a close friend to join our staff	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organisation is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice - another organisation may not match the overall benefits I have here	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I do not think that wanting to be a 'company man' or 'company woman' is sensible anymore	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
To know that my own work had made a contribution to the good of the organisation would please me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

The following statements contain opinions that people might hold about the confidence and trust that can be placed in others at work, both fellow workers and management. Please tick one box in each row to indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Agree strongly	Agree	Agree slightly	Neutral	Disagree slightly	Disagree	Disagree strongly
Management at my firm is sincere in its attempts to meet the workers' point of view	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our firm has a poor future unless it can attract better managers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I got into difficulties at work I know my workmates would try and help me out	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Management can be trusted to make sensible decisions for the firm's future	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can trust the people I work with to lend me a hand if I needed it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Management at work seems to do an efficient job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel quite confident that the firm will always try to treat me fairly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most of my workmates can be relied upon to do as they say they will do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have full confidence in the skills of my workmates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please read each of the following statements and then tick a box which shows how you agree with each one.

	Agree strongly	Agree	Agree slightly	Neutral	Disagree slightly	Disagree	Disagree strongly
Generally speaking I am very satisfied with my job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Generally speaking I am very satisfied with my organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do on this job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I often think of leaving this job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I often think of leaving this organisation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I intend to leave this job within the next 12 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I intend to leave this organisation within the next 12 months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

In this section we would like to ask you how things have been going at work in the past *few* weeks. Please rate the items by ticking the appropriate box. Tick one box in every row.

Thinking of the past few weeks, how much of the time has your job made you feel each of the following?

	All of the time	Most of the time	Much of the time	Some of the time	Occas-ionally	Never
Happy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Irritated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Comfortable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Worried	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lifeless	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cheerful	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Optimistic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fatigued	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Depressed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anxious	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Motivated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Calm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Satisfied	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relaxed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Full of energy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Enthusiastic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Miserable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tired	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Contented	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alert	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	All of the time	Most of the time	Much of the time	Some of the time	Occas-ionally	Never
Dull	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Still	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Drowsy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aroused	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hostile	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Active	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sluggish	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quiet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sleepy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stimulated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Patient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aggressive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Passive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bored	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gloomy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uneasy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Angry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pleased	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tense	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Annoyed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Biographical details

Please answer all of the questions in Part A. Use block capitals.

What department do you work in?

Gender:

How long have you been employed at this company?
(Years/months)

Where do you work?
(Building/town/country)

Age:
(Years)

How long have you been doing this job?
(Years/months)

What is your job title?

Today's date:
(dd/mm/yy)

What is the nature of your contract of employment?
(Permanent/short term/self-employed/employed by third party)

What is your occupation?

Nationality:

If you are employed on a short-term contract, what is the length of the contract? (Years/months)

APPENDIX 6

MAIN STUDY

The following pages contain the questionnaires and the accompanying letters that used in the main study. Due to Nottingham University's rules on the page layout requirements of Ph.D. theses, they have been realigned and some spaces taken out so that they can conform. The contents are identical to the questionnaires and letters used in the main study.

In many of the letters and questionnaires reference was made to a specific name of the utility, or business unit. To preserve the identity of the organisation that provided the site of the study, these references to have been replaced with text in square brackets that illustrates the type of text that was in that position in the actual questionnaires and letters. The letters to Top Team members and department heads were individually addressed to specific individuals.

The four types of questionnaire (Top Team, department members, applicants, people in university job centres seeking work) were each printed on a particular colour of 80 g/qm paper so that they could easily be distinguished from each other to avoid miskeying.

The questionnaire to department members was backed-up (i.e. printed on both sides of one sheet of A4 paper). This caused problems in one department as the department head mysteriously decided to photocopy the questionnaire to circulate to her department members (every department head was sent ten copies of the questionnaire so there was no need for her to do this). She only photocopied one side of the questionnaire.

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Dear Applicant,

I am writing to you as the lead researcher of an important academic research project that is looking at the effects of selection processes on graduate applicants. The research is funded by the Open University. [Company name] have been kind enough to allow us to study their graduate selection processes for this purpose.

In addition to yourself, I am writing to all applicants to [company name] to ask everyone to complete a short questionnaire for us (enclosed). If you are offered a job by the company, I shall write to you again when the selection process is over, to ask you to complete another similar short questionnaire. So that we can match up the second questionnaires to the first ones, we need to ask for some personal information.

Importantly, I should like to assure you of the complete confidentiality of your responses. Only I, as the lead researcher will see your questionnaires and I will not allow anyone access to the data under any circumstances. The findings of the research will only be reported in ways that ensures that no individual can be identified. This means that your responses will not be seen by the interviewers and *the questionnaire will not be part of the selection process.* What matters to us is your real opinions, so please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

Please complete the one page questionnaire, which asks you to rate the desirability of 24 items. Return it in the prepaid envelope to Jon Billsberry, School of Management, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. You do not need to put a stamp on the envelope.

I'd like to thank you for your help and co-operation during the research project.

Yours faithfully,

Jon Billsberry
Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour

Please decide *how desirable it is for each of the following 24 items to be part of the organisation you work for.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most and least desirable for you. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns. *Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

How desirable is it for each of the following items to be part of the organisation you work for?

		Very undesirable	Undesirable	Neither desirable nor undesirable	Desirable	Very desirable	Important	Essential
1	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

25 Name: (please use BLOCK CAPITALS) _____

26 Gender: (please tick appropriate box) ☐ Male ☐ Female

27 Date of birth: ___ ___ [day] ___ ___ [month] ___ ___ [year]

28 Have you had a full-time job? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, approx for how long _____ [months]

29 Have you had a part-time job? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, approx for how long _____ [months]

Please return the completed questionnaire in the **prepaid envelope**, or to **Jon Billsberry, School of Management, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA**.

The Open University

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Open Business School

[insert date]

[insert name]
[insert position]
[insert address1]
[insert address2]
[insert address3]

Dear [name],

I am currently working with Group Management Development to investigate whether or not graduates who share the values of the organisation are being attracted and selected. This is an important research project with benefits for both [company name] and the academic community.

I'm writing to ask for your help in completing the enclosed questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to capture the values and culture of [business unit] as viewed by its senior members. This information is crucial because we need to construct a profile of the organisation's values as seen by those members who have an overview so that we can assess how well applicants 'fit'.

Could you complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me in the pre-paid addressed envelope please? The questionnaire should take no more than five minutes to complete.

I want to assure you of the complete anonymity of your responses. I have not asked you to put your name on the questionnaires and only I shall see your completed questionnaire. Furthermore, the findings of the research will only be reported in ways that ensures that no individual or organisation can be identified. Therefore, I hope you are confident of the complete anonymity of your responses.

I'd like to thank you for your help and co-operation and if you have any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to contact me on any of the above telephone numbers or by email.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Billsberry
Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour

Please decide *how characteristic each of the following 24 items are of [business unit name]*. We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most and least characteristic. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns. *Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

How characteristic of [business unit name] are the following items?

		Very uncharacteristic	Uncharac-teristic	Neither characteristic nor unch'teristic	Sometimes found	Characteristic	Very characteristic	A defining characteristic
1	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

25 Gender: (please tick appropriate box) ☐ Male ☐ Female

26 Age: ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 61+

27 Roughly how long have you worked at Southern Water? _____ [years]

28 Roughly how long have you worked within the ScottishPower group? _____ [years]

29 How many other organisations have you worked for? _____ [number of companies]

Thank you for your help and co-operation.

The Open University

Open Business School

Our Ref.: \research\team members letter

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[company] – [department]

I am currently working with Group Management Development to investigate whether or not graduates are being attracted and selected who share the values of the organisation.

I'm writing to you to ask for your help in completing the enclosed questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to capture the values and culture of your department so that we can construct a profile of the department's values as seen by those working in it. We will use this profile to analyse how well applicants 'fit' the department.

Please could you complete the enclosed two-sided questionnaire and return it to me in the pre-paid addressed envelope.

I should like to assure you of the complete anonymity of your responses. I have not asked you to put your name on the questionnaires and only I shall see your completed questionnaire. Furthermore, the findings of the research will only be reported in ways that ensures that no individual or organisation can be identified. Therefore, I hope you are confident of the complete anonymity of your responses.

I'd like to thank you for your help and co-operation and if you have any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to contact me on any of the above telephone numbers or by email.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Billsberry
Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour

Please decide *how characteristic each of the following 24 items are of your department.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most and least characteristic. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns. *Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

How characteristic of your department are the following items?

		Very uncharacteristic	Uncharac-teristic	Neither characteristic nor unch'teristic	Sometimes found	Characteristic	Very characteristic	A defining characteristic
1	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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18	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

25 Roughly how long have you worked in the [Utility name]? _____ [years]

26 Roughly how long have you worked for [Business Unit]? _____ [years]

27 Roughly how long have you worked in this department? _____ [years]

28 Roughly how many other companies have you worked for? _____ [no. of companies]

PLEASE TURN OVER

Please decide *how desirable it is for each of the following 24 items to be part of the organisation you work for.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most and least desirable for you. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns. *Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

How desirable is it for each of the following items to be part of the organisation you work for?

		Very undesirable	Undesirable	Neither desirable nor undesirable	Desirable	Very desirable	Important	Essential
29	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38	Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39	People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40	Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41	Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43	People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44	Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45	People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

53 Gender: (please tick appropriate box) ☐ Male ☐ Female

54 Age: ☐ 30 or younger ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 61+

Many thanks for your help and co-operation.

[Business Unit] - [Department]

PLEASE TURN OVER

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[Date]

Dear Job Seeker,

I am writing to you as the lead researcher of an important academic research project that is looking at the effects of selection processes on graduate applicants. The research is funded by the Open University.

We would like to ask for your help in completing the attached questionnaire. It should only take about 5 minutes to complete. You can return it to us in the prepaid envelope.

The purpose of the questionnaire is to record the work values of a large cross-section of students who graduate this year and are looking for full-time work. We will use this data to produce a general profile of graduate work values that we can compare to the work values of people taken on by several large companies.

Importantly, I should like to assure you of the complete confidentiality of your responses. The questionnaires are anonymous, and the findings of the research will only be reported in ways that ensures that no individual can be identified. What matters to us is your real opinions, so please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

Thank you for your time and for your help.

Yours faithfully,

Jon Billsberry
Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour

Please decide *how desirable it is for each of the following 24 items to be part of the organisation you work for.* We are particularly interested to get a feel for which items are most and least desirable for you. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would try to use the full range of the scale and distribute your responses widely across the seven columns. *Please circle one, and only one, number in every row.*

How desirable is it for each of the following items to be part of the organisation you work for?

		Very undesirable	Undesirable	Neither desirable nor undesirable	Desirable	Very desirable	Important	Essential
1	People are competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	People are quick to take advantage of opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Being fair is a priority for people in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	People try to fit in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Staff pay attention to detail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Managers are concerned that people are treated well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Staff have a lot of autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	People have respect for the rights of others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	People work long hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Employees are very busy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	People act on their own initiative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Staff are precise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Staff have considerable demands made of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Staff experiment with new ways of doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	People focus on profits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Employees are given praise for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	People develop friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	People work in collaboration with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	There are opportunities for growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	People make quality a priority	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Employees take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	Staff are rewarded with high pay for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Staff approach their work in a very organised manner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Staff are continually being innovative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

25 Subject studied at University: _____

26 What sorts of jobs are you applying for? _____

27 Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

28 Date of birth: ____ ____ [day] ____ ____ [month] ____ ____ [year]

29 Have you had a full-time job? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, approx for how long _____ [months]

30 Have you had a part-time job? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, approx for how long _____ [months]

Please return the completed questionnaire in the **prepaid envelope**, or to **Jon Billsberry, School of Management, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA**. Many thanks for your help.

[University]