A Survey of

Recruitment
&Selection Practices

in Florist Crop Production Firms

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Abstract

Many florist crop producers have reported difficulty with attracting qualified employees to positions within their businesses. The purpose of this study was to define the difficulties florist crop producers face in attracting qualified workers.

Managers of 72 florist crop production firms in Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania participated in a telephone survey designed to gather information on recruitment and selection issues for florist crop producers. The survey results revealed that recruitment practices were not used as frequently as they could be. It also appeared that managers were doing a better job with the selection process than they were with the recruitment process. In addition, compensation appeared to be closely linked to the ability of employers to effectively recruit job applicants.

One third of the employers surveyed indicated that attracting qualified employees to the business was not difficult, while two-thirds indicated that attracting qualified job applicants was either somewhat or very difficult.

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The study found that florist crop production firms with more than 12.5 FTEs (full-time equivalents) used recommended, more formal recruitment and selection methods more frequently than producers with fewer FTEs. When comparing businesses by how difficult managers said that attracting qualified workers is, there were significant differences. Those who said attracting qualified applicants was not difficult operated significantly larger businesses. In addition, managers who said attracting workers was not difficult were more satisfied with the quality of their workers and their rate of employee turnover and perceived that their employees were more satisfied with their jobs.

Improved recruitment practices coupled with a competitive wage and benefit package appear to be keys to improving the ability of employers to attract the most qualified workers for positions within the business.

Introduction

Maloney and Milligan (1992), in a survey of human re-
source management practices in florist crop production
firms in Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania,
found that managers expressed difficulty in attracting
qualified people for positions in the business. This study
examines recruitment and selection issues in florist crop
production firms to determine the specific problems faced
by florist crop producers. Key issues for managers recruit-
ing and selecting employees, based on a review of the
literature and the authors' experience include:

1. Obstacles in the external environment which make it
   difficult for managers to attract qualified workers.

2. Recruiting a sufficient size pool of applicants to
   ensure that within that pool there are qualified work-
   ers.

3. Use of proper selection techniques to ensure the
   correct person is hired.

4. The extent to which the wage and benefit package is
   attractive to employees and to what extent it is com-
   petitive with other employers in the area.

This study evaluates the extent to which employers are
using recommended recruitment and selection procedures.
It also examines employer perceptions of the effectiveness
of recruitment and selection practices. The study deter-

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mines the types of workers that are most difficult to recruit. The previous study focused on the level of formality of personnel management practices. This study identifies both the positive and negative aspects of attracting qualified workers and makes recommendations for improving recruitment and selection processes.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are:

To prioritize the key issues in attracting a qualified work force for the florist crop production industry.

To determine the recruitment and selection procedures used by florist crop producers and their frequency of use and to determine the perceived effectiveness of recruitment and selection procedures.

To compare recruitment and selection practices between those who do and do not have difficulty attracting workers.

To determine the types of positions that are most difficult to fill.

To determine differences between the recruitment and selection practices of larger firms compared to smaller firms.

To make recommendations to florist crop producers regarding the recruitment and selection of employees.

Review of the Literature

Maloney and Milligan (1992) in a survey of human resource management practices in 104 florist crop production firms found several challenges facing florist crop producers in the states of Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Growers expressed concern over the difficulty of attracting qualified people for positions in the business. They also expressed concern over their ability to pay competitive wages and benefits. The study found that as firms grew in size, the human resource management practices used tend to be more sophisticated or formalized.

Maloney and Milligan also found that only the least time consuming and most informal recruiting methods—employee referrals and word of mouth—were used frequently by more than a quarter of the firms studied. More formal

methods such as advertising, high school and college recruitment, government employment services, and private agencies were used far less. In contrast, selection methods were used more frequently. The perceived effectiveness of selection methods were also rated higher than the effectiveness of recruitment methods.

In a study of 84 small businesses, McEvoy (1984) found that the recruitment and selection practices used in small businesses were often unimaginative. Only application forms and interviews were relied on heavily in the selection process.

Hornsby and Kuratko (1990) in a study of 247 small firms in the Midwest found that a number of personnel topics emerge as important issues for managers. Among them was the issue of attracting a qualified work force. They also found that as businesses grow in size they tend to use more sophisticated human resource management practices.

A study by Kohl (1976) that focused on human resource management practices in the dairy industry indicated that most employers used only one or two recruitment methods and that word of mouth was by far the most frequently used method.

In summary, a review of the literature indicates a persistent need on the part of small business (including horticultural businesses) to attract qualified applicants. Previous research suggests that key recruitment and selection issues which need to be addressed include: providing employees with a competitive compensation package and the effective use of a variety of recruitment and selection methods. The use of many human resource management practices (including recruitment and selection) is still in the undeveloped stage in small horticultural businesses.

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Methodology

This section describes the research methods used to conduct this study. It begins with a list of definitions of terms used in this report. Survey sampling methods are then described, followed by a discussion of survey enumeration and the survey response rates.

Definitions

The term florist crop producer is used to refer to greenhouse operators who produce crops for the florist trade industry including bedding plants, cut flowers, and potted plants. The terms manager, survey participant, employer, and grower also refer to the florist crop producer. In this report, "attracting qualified workers" includes recruitment, selection, and other issues that affect whether a person will join the business. Recruitment refers to the process of creating a pool of individuals on a timely basis, in sufficient numbers, with appropriate qualifications, to apply for jobs within the business. Selection is the process of choosing from among a group of applicants those best qualified to do the job. Compensation refers to the wages and benefits that an employer offers to an employee. The phrase "factors outside the business" refers to factors that are beyond the control of employers that affect their ability to attract workers. These factors may include the labor market, government regulations, qualifications of the work force in general, and others. A salary survey is a device used by managers to determine the wages of employees at other nearby or

similar businesses in which firms ask other employers what they pay their employees. FTEs (full-time equivalents) measure the size of the work force by converting the time worked by each employee to a full-time basis.

Sampling the Population

The 1992 membership directory of the Professional Plant Growers Association (PPGA) was used to draw the survey sample. This membership list was selected because it includes primarily florist crop producers. The sample was drawn from four states: Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. These states were chosen because they are the largest florist crop producing states in the North East and the North Central regions of the United States. Also the 1992 (Maloney and Milligan) study used a sample drawn from these states. Grower names with sales of less than $150,000 a year were excluded from the sample to help ensure that growers with 3 or more non-family employees per year were included in the sample. Two of every three names were then selected to be in the sample. The total sample included 118 names of florist crop producers in the four selected states.

Survey Enumeration

The survey instrument was designed for telephone enumeration (Appendix A). A telephone survey was chosen because the response rate would be higher and faster than with a mail survey while avoiding the high cost of an onsite survey.

Each person to be called was sent an introductory letter approximately one week before the beginning of the survey period. The letter described the background and purpose of the survey, requested their participation, and was signed by the authors. A copy of the letter is provided in Appendix A.

Enumerators were trained specifically to conduct this survey. Training focused on the content of the survey questions and the information the questions were designed to elicit from survey participants. The survey instrument was tested with 3 florist crop producers from who had not been in the survey group. The survey took place in a three-week period during March 1993.

Participants were asked a series of screening questions to qualify them for the study. To qualify, participants had to:

1. be one of the people responsible for recruiting and selecting new employees,

2. be involved primarily in florist crop production, as opposed to wholesale or retail business operation,

3. employ at least three non-family members in their business annually (regardless of whether these were year-round or seasonal).

Survey Response

A total of 72 managers of florist crop production firms meeting the survey qualifications responded to the telephone survey (Table 1). The final sample included 118 florist crop production firms. Of these, 83.9 percent were contacted successfully and 61.0 percent completed the survey. Thirty percent of those who completed the survey were in Michigan, 18 percent in New York, 33 percent in Ohio, and 13 percent in Pennsylvania.

The survey was completed in an average of 16 minutes, ranging from 10 to 25 minutes.

Table 1. Response of Florist Crop Producers in the Drawn Sample

| | State | | | | |
	MI	NY	OH	PA	Total
			Number		
Surveys completed	23	14	25	10	72
Surveys not completed	22	7	10	7	46
Refusals	11	1	3	1	16
Don't qualify	4	1	2	4	11
No contact	7	5	5	2	19

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Results

The purpose of this section is to summarize the survey data and interpret it in terms of attracting a qualified work force in the florist crop production industry. Demographic information will be presented first, followed by explanations of several labor force issues, a discussion of difficulties in filling different types of positions in the business, and analysis of recruitment and selection procedures.

Characteristics of Businesses

This section presents demographic information about the businesses studied, including marketing methods used, size of production facility, and size of the work force in FTEs (full-time equivalents).

This study focused on managers of businesses that are primarily involved in the production of florist crops. Florist crop producers can be described by how they market their products (Figure 1). Thirty five percent used only wholesale marketing, 18 percent used only retail marketing, and the remaining 47 percent used both wholesale and retail marketing.

Figure 1

Marketing Channels Used
72 Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993

Production, wholesale, and retail marketing 47%

Production and wholesale marketing 35%

Production and retail marketing 18%
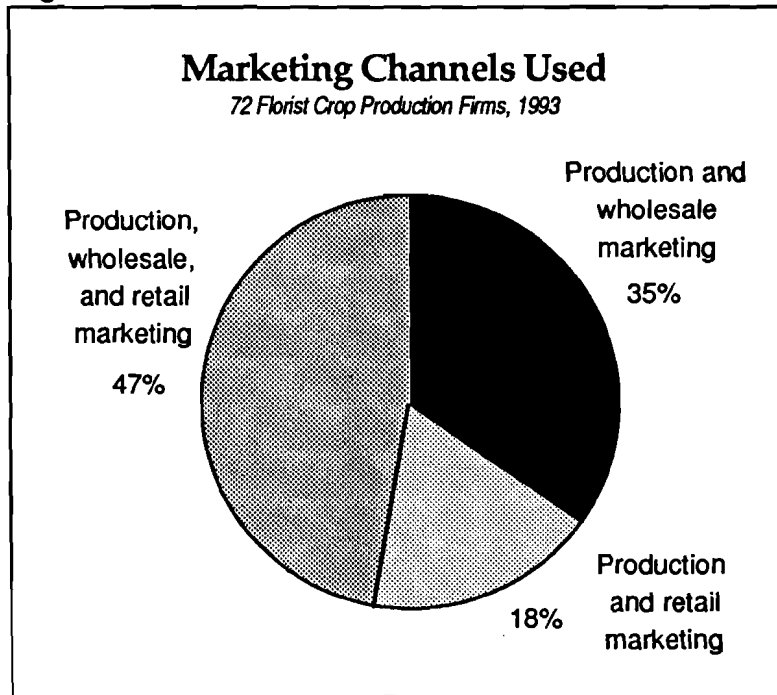
The size of the production facility has a direct impact on the size and composition of the work force in a florist crop production business. Fifty percent of the firms studied ranged in size from 1 to 5 acres under greenhouse production, while 29 percent of the firms had 5 or more acres of greenhouse production facilities (Figure 2).

Size of Labor Force

The size of the work force impacts the human resource management practices in the business in a number of ways. Small business research has indicated that as the size of firms grow, there is a tendency to use more formal personnel management practices (Milligan and Maloney, 1992; Hornsby and Kuratko, 1990). As firms grow, there also tends to be a need for a more highly qualified work force since larger businesses often use higher level technology and require a larger management staff.

To determine the size of the labor force managers were asked how many workers were employed. The following

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Figure 2

Production Facility Size
70 Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993
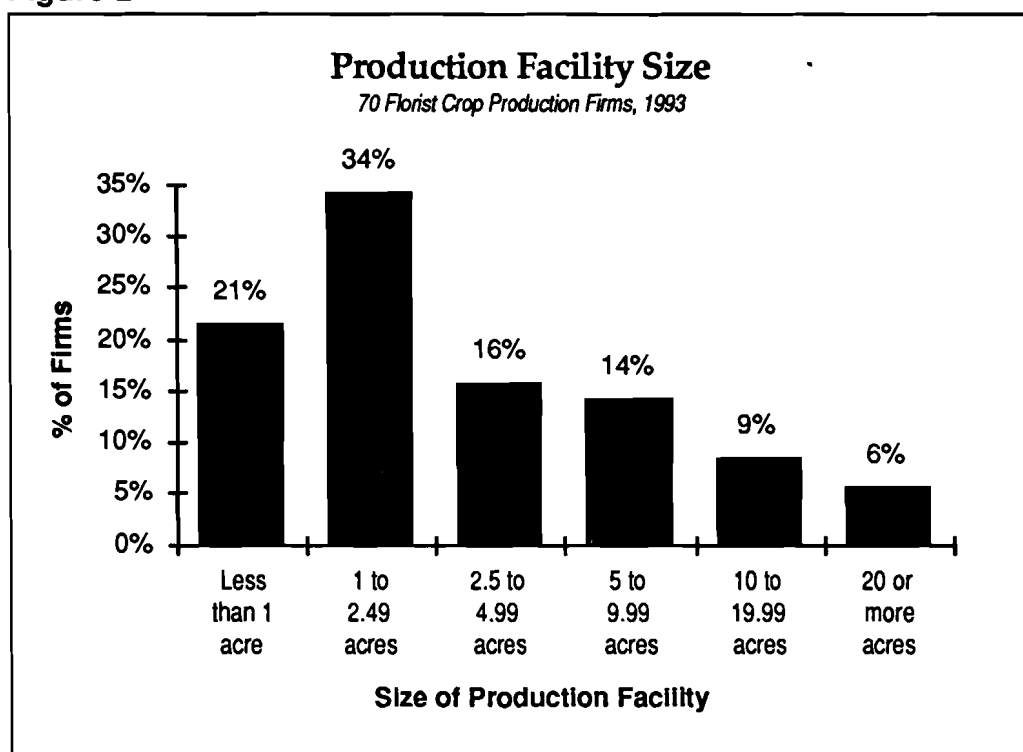
procedure was used. If employees worked less than full-time, that is, less than 40 hours per week, the manager was asked how many hours per week, on average, the employees worked. If employees worked only seasonally, less than 12 months of the year, the manager was asked how many weeks of the year the employees worked.

The size of the labor force was then measured by calculating full-time equivalents (FTEs). FTEs measure the size of the work force by converting the time worked by each employee to a full-time basis. The contribution of each worker to total FTEs is calculated using the formula:

$$\left(\frac{\text{number of weeks per year employed}}{52}\right) \times \left(\frac{\text{number of hours per week worked}}{40}\right) = \text{FTE}$$

Managers were then asked to distinguish between family and non-family workers, in four categories: full-time year-round workers, part-time year-round workers, full-time seasonal workers, and part-time seasonal workers.

Florist crop production firms in this study averaged 36.0 FTEs. Firms ranged from 2.9 to 407.1 FTEs. An average of 80.1% of the businesses' FTEs were made up of full-time employees rather than part-time employees. When the

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businesses are divided into size categories, based on total FTEs, the businesses with smaller work forces comprise the largest portion of the sample (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Distribution of Businesses by Size of Work Force
72 Florist Crop Producers, 1993
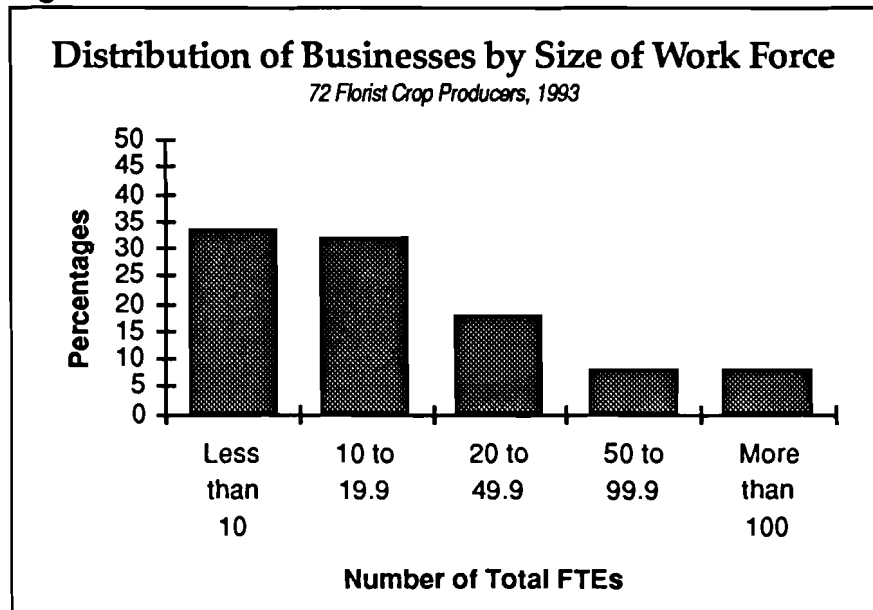
There were several very large businesses represented in the sample. In fact, businesses with more than 100 FTEs employed nearly 50 percent of all FTEs in the businesses surveyed (Figure 4). A comparison of Figure 9 and Figure 9.5 illustrates the prevalence of smaller businesses and the concentration of FTEs in larger businesses.

Figure 4

Distribution of Work Force by Size of Work Force
72 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

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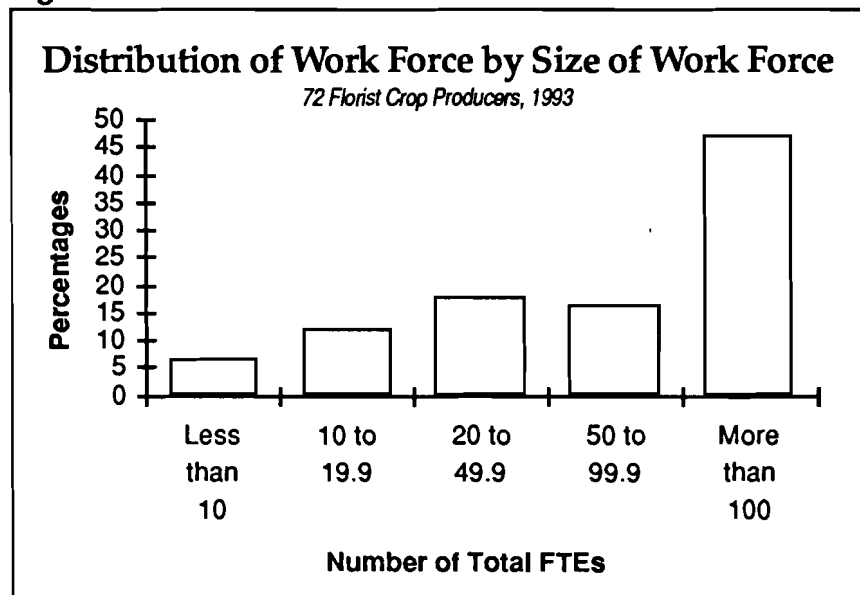
This and other studies have illustrated that family labor is an important part of the small business work force (Maloney & Milligan, 1992; Maloney & Woodruff, 1989). The businesses represented in this study employed an average of 3.5 family FTEs. This represents 9.6 percent of the total FTEs in the businesses studied. Family member workers almost always work full-time year-round, rather than only part-time or seasonally (Table 2).

Table 2. Contribution to Total FTEs by Family and Non-Family Workers by Type of Employment

Type of Worker	FTEs	% of Total FTEs
Family		
Full-Time Year-Round	3.01	8.3
Part-Time Year-Round	0.27	0.1
Full-Time Seasonal	0.11	0
Part-Time Seasonal	0.05	0
Total Family	**3.45**	**9.6**
Non-Family		
Full-Time Year-Round	23.19	64.4
Part-Time Year-Round	2.68	7.4
Full-Time Seasonal	5.63	15.6
Part-Time Seasonal	1.06	2.9
Total Family	**32.57**	**90.4**

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Seasonal employees are an important component of the labor force to florist crop producers, particularly bedding plant producers. Seasonal workers make up 19.1 percent of average total FTEs in this study (Table 3).

Table 3.   Contribution to Total FTEs by Seasonal and Year-Round Employees

Type of Worker	FTEs	% of Total FTEs
Seasonal		
Full-Time	5.7	15.9
Part-Time	1.1	3.1
Non-Family	6.7	18.6
Family	0.2	0
Total Seasonal	**6.9**	**19.1**
Year-Round		
Full-Time	26.2	72.8
Part-Time	3.0	8.2
Non-Family	25.9	71.8
Family	3.3	9.1
Total Year-Round	**29.2**	**81.0**

The work force is primarily full-time, year-round (Table 4). Firms using primarily retail marketing employ proportionately more part-time workers. Firms using primarily wholesale marketing employ more seasonal workers as a percentage of their total work force.

Table 4.   Proportion of Business That Is Full-Time and Year-Round by Type of Business

Marketing Channel Used	% of Work Force that is Full-Time	% of Work Force that is Year-Round
Wholesale only	83.1	71.2
Retail only	70.6	78.0
Both Wholesale & Retail	81.5	70.2
Total Averages	**80.1**	**71.9**

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Labor Force Issues

This section examines several issues affecting human resource management in florist crop production businesses. Employers were asked how they determine wage rates. They were also asked for their perceptions of various employment issues: employee satisfaction with wages and benefits, employee job satisfaction, competition for employees, employee perceptions of working conditions, qualify of their employees, and employee turnover.

A frequently used tool for determining employee compensation in both large and small businesses is the salary survey. To determine compensation rates, a firm conducts a survey of salaries paid by competing businesses in the community or in similar industries. Based on the results of the survey, the firm then sets a competitive compensation rate, attempting to attract the most qualified applicants possible. Basing wage rates to some extent on what other employers pay is a generally accepted practice, especially in larger firms.

Only four percent of the employers in this study often determine what others are paying and use that information to decide their wage rate (Figure 5). Twenty nine percent indicated that they generally do not base their wage rate on what other employers are paying: they usually pay what they can afford. The majority, 71 percent, indicated that they gain a general sense of what others are paying and sometimes use this information as a base to decide their

Figure 5

How Often Employee Pay is Based on What Other Employers Pay
72 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Often
4%

Never
29%

Sometimes
67%

17
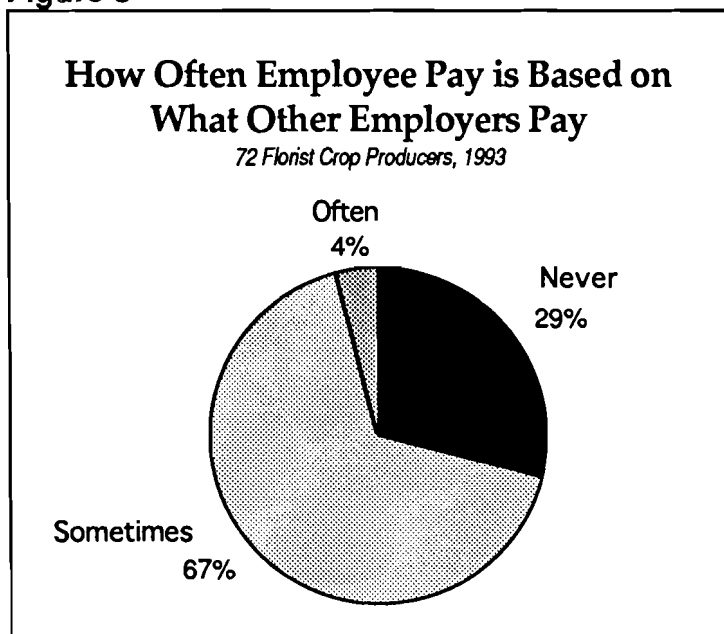
wage rates. The fact that 71 percent of employers are at least sometimes using the wage rates of other employers as a guide in determining their own wage rates is an indicator that employers are mindful of the need to pay competitive wage rates. In the authors' opinion, "sometimes" is an appropriate answer since the results of salary surveys should be taken into consideration along with other important factors such as the local job market, employee skill levels, benefits provided, etc.

Fifteen percent of the employers felt that overall, their employees were very satisfied with the provided wage and benefit package, 78 percent felt the employees were somewhat satisfied, and 7 percent thought that their employees were not satisfied with the wages and benefits (Figure 6). It is important to recognize that these are manager perceptions of employee satisfaction with wages and benefits and not the employees' perceptions. It is possible that the employees perceptions would be different.

When employers were asked how satisfied their employees

Figure 6

Managers' Perceptions of Employee Satisfaction With Wages and Benefits
72 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Not Satisfied
7%

Very Satisfied
15%

Somewhat
Satisfied
78%

are with their jobs, 48 percent said somewhat satisfied and 52 percent said very satisfied. None of the managers interviewed thought that their employees were not satisfied with their jobs. Again, it is possible that the employee perceptions of job satisfaction could be different from the manager perceptions.

Employers were asked, "With what other types of businesses do you compete for employees?" Over half of the survey participants responded that they compete for employees with retail businesses, which include supermarkets, fast food chains, gas stations, mall stores, and other local retail outlets. About one third of the survey participants indicated that they compete with light industry, construction, factories, and trucking companies in their local communities. Another third of the respondents indicated that they compete with agricultural and horticultural businesses in the area and many employers said that they compete with other greenhouses and garden centers. A smaller group of approximately seven respondents indicated that they compete with almost everyone in the local community, depending upon the positions they are recruiting for. A summary of the responses to this question is found in Appendix B.

The competition question was designed to determine to what extent employers perceive that they compete with other employers in the community. It is an important issue and one that some of the participants surveyed had not previously thought a great deal about. Competition for employees affects the compensation package that employers offer. When it is difficult to attract qualified employees, it is important for an employer to determine the wages and benefits being paid by other businesses with which they compete. Competition for employees can also affect how aggressively employers must recruit applicants.

When employers were asked how they would rate the employees' perception of working conditions in the florist crop production industry, 6 percent responded "Not very favorable," 76 percent responded "Somewhat favorable," and 19 percent responded "Very favorable" (Figure 7). It speaks well for the florist crop production industry that 94 percent of the respondents felt that employee perceptions of the industry were either somewhat or very favorable.

Figure 7

Managers' Perceptions of How Employees' View Working Conditions in the Industry
70 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Not Very Favorable 6%

Very Favorable 18%

Somewhat Favorable 76%
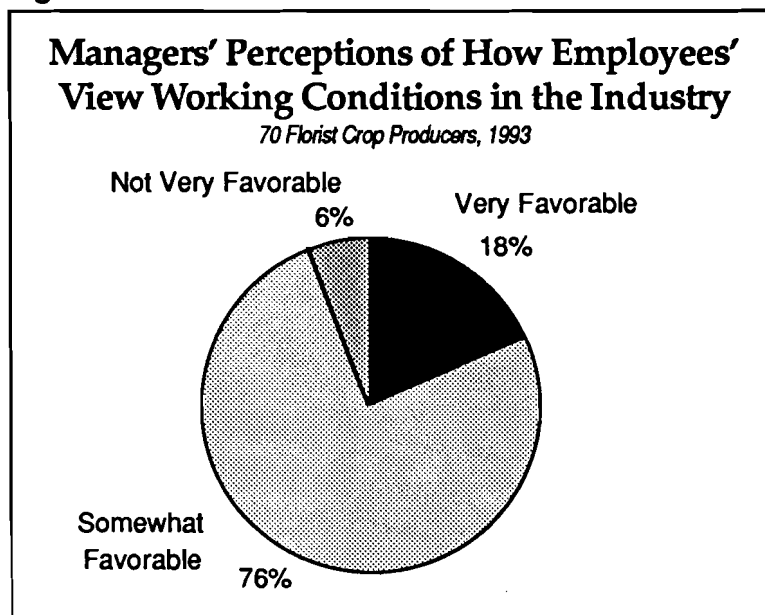
Since this study was designed to gain insight into issues related to attracting qualified workers, managers were asked how satisfied they were with the quality of their workers and with employee turnover. Generally, managers appeared satisfied with the quality of their current work force: 62 percent said that they were very satisfied with the quality of their workers and only one percent was not satisfied (Figure 8). By comparison, employers were less satisfied with the turnover in their businesses. While only 1 percent of the employers indicated that they were not satisfied with the quality of their workers, 8 percent indicated that they were not satisfied with employee turnover (Figure 9). So while employee turnover is perceived by some as more of a problem than satisfaction with the quality of workers, it is still not perceived to be a major problem by employers interviewed.

Figure 8

Manager Satisfaction With Quality of Workers
71 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Not Satisfied
1%

Somewhat
Satisfied
37%

Very
Satisfied
62%

Figure 9

How Satisfied Managers Are With Employee Turnover
71 Florist Crop Producers

Not Very Favorable
6%

Very Favorable
18%

Somewhat
Favorable
76%

21
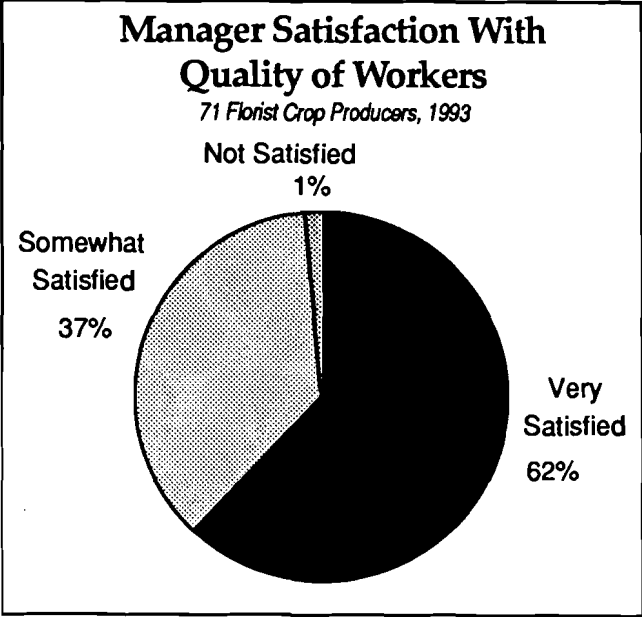
Limitations to Attracting Qualified Job Applicants

One purpose of this study is to make recommendations to the florist crop production industry about how to improve its ability to attract qualified workers. To do this, it is helpful to look at the factors that employers see as barriers to attracting qualified workers. Based on a review of the literature and the authors' past experience, there are four primary issues that employers face when they are attracting employees:

- Recruitment: the process of attracting a pool of qualified candidates. Poor recruitment cannot be compensated for by good selection practices, compensation, or other management practices. It must be performed well from the start.

- Selection: the process of choosing the best applicant for the job. Assuming the applicant pool does contain at least several qualified job applicants, the challenge for the employer then becomes one of predicting future job performance. Proper use of selection techniques such as interviews, reference checks, skills testing, and trial periods enhance the employer's ability to choose the best applicant.

- Compensation: providing competitive wages and benefits. The compensation issue may not only affect an applicant's decision to join the firm if the job is offered, but also can affect whether or not an applicant even applies for a job, based on the perception of how well the employer pays.

- Factors outside the business, such as the labor market, employee perception of the florist crop production industry, government regulations, the qualifications of the work force in general, etc. External factor can often act as barriers to attracting a qualified work force. The managers' role then becomes one of recognizing the external factors beyond their control and adjusting their management strategies to accommodate these barriers. Instead of taking this approach, managers sometimes blame their problems in attracting employees on the economy, the high compensation rates outside their business, or other factors beyond their control.

Employers were asked which of four main factors limit their ability to attract well qualified workers: recruitment, selection, compensation, and factors outside the business, such as the labor market, government regulations, etc. They were

then asked to rank each factor from the most limiting to the least limiting (Figure 10). Clearly compensation and recruitment were seen as the greatest barriers to attracting a qualified staff, followed closely by factors outside the business. Most managers surveyed did not view the selection process as a problem compared to the other three issues. However, excellent selection practices cannot compensate for difficulties in compensation, recruitment or factors outside the business.

Figure 10

Distribution of Rankings of Limiting Aspects of Attracting Job Applicants*
Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Legend: ■ Ranked first ▨ Ranked second ▨ Ranked third □ Ranked fourth

* Survey participants were asked to rank from one to four the factors which are most limiting to them as they attempt to attract qualified workers. A one indicated that the factor was most limiting and a ranking of four was least limiting. There were 67 respondents for compensation and factors outside the business and 66 respondents for recruitment and selection.

The survey participants were sorted into two groups based on their response to this question—those who ranked external factors first and those who did not. Eighteen respondents ranked external factors first and 49 respondents ranked external factors second, third, or fourth. The respondents who ranked external factors first had production facilities that were nearly double the size of those who ranked external factors second, third, or fourth. It is also interesting to note that the survey participants who felt external factors were most limiting found it less difficult to attract qualified workers than the other group and they tended to base wage rates on what other employers were paying more often than other managers in the study. Managers concerned about external factors also were more satisfied with the quality of their workers and with turn-

over rates, and thought their workers were more satisfied with their jobs than other managers (Table 5).

Table 5. Responses Based on Ranking of Barriers to Attracting Workers

	External factors ranked first	External factors ranked 2nd, 3rd or 4th
Size of Production Facility, in acres	11.8	5.9
Managers Who Say Attracting Qualified Workers is Not Difficult	50.0%	22.5%
Managers Who Base Wage Rates on What Other Employers Pay Often or Sometimes	88.9%	63.2%
Manager Who Are Very Satisfied With Quality of Workers	88.2%	53.1%
Manager Who Are Very Satisfied With Employee Turnover	83.3%	56.3%
Managers Who Said Workers Were Very Satisfied With Their Jobs	70.6%	44.9%

There are two possible reasons for these differences. First, it is possible that larger firms have developed very good recruitment, selection, and compensation practices internally and that their greatest barriers to attracting qualified people are external. Second, as firms grow in size, external factors such as required record keeping, safety regulations, and labor regulations have a much greater impact on the business.

Attracting Various Types of Workers

The survey attempted to determine how difficult it was to attract workers in general as well as the perceived difficulty of attracting various types of workers. Managers were asked how difficult they felt it was to attract qualified applicants in general. Eighteen percent thought it was very difficult, 49 percent thought it was somewhat difficult, and 33 percent thought it was not difficult to attract qualified job applicants (Figure 11).

In the florist crop production industry, there is a need for seasonal as well as year-round employees to work during

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Figure 11

Difficulty of Attracting Qualified Job Applicants
72 Florist Crop Producers

Very difficult
18%

Not difficult
33%

Somewhat
difficult
49%
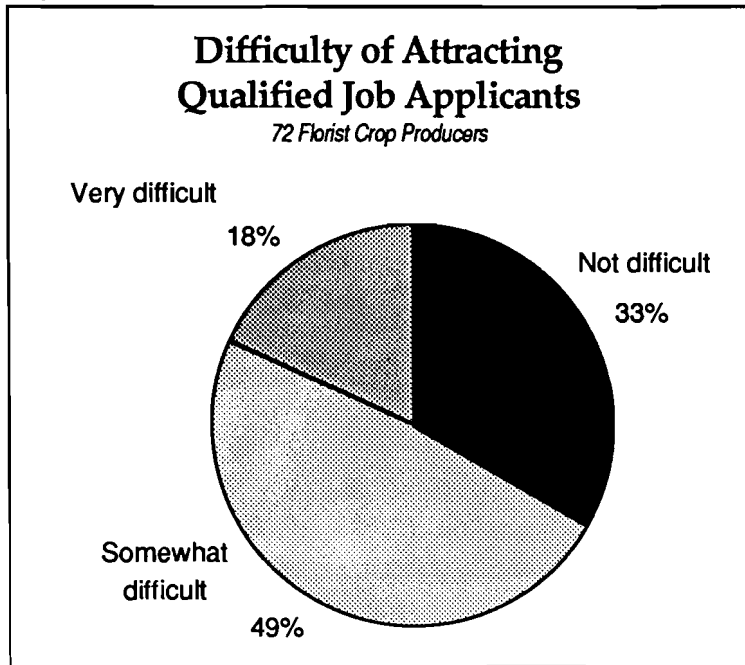
peak production and marketing seasons of the year. The survey attempted to determine if there was a difference in the difficulty of hiring seasonal employees versus year-round employees. Forty nine percent of the managers felt that seasonal and year-round employees were equally difficult to attract, while 35 percent of the managers felt that seasonal employees were more difficult to attract, and 16 percent felt that year-round employees were more difficult to attract (Figure 12).

Figure 12

Difficulty of Attracting Seasonal and Year-Round Employees
68 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Seasonal are
more difficult
to attract
35%

They are
equally
difficult to
attract
49%

Year-round are
more difficult to
attract

16%

25
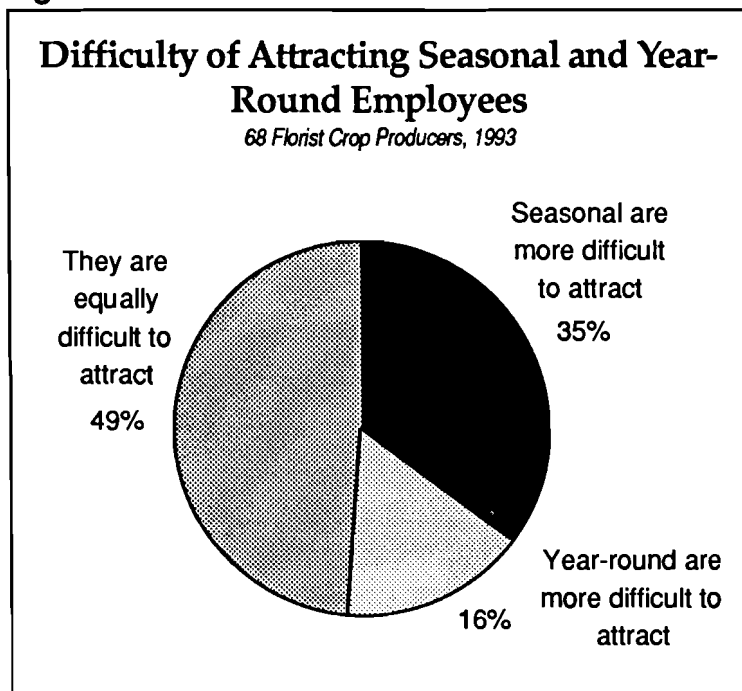
While there was less concern over attracting seasonal employees than expected, these results appear to reflect the fact that there are often more problems inherent in using seasonal employees than year-round employees. Sometimes it is difficult to get good employees to return year after year during the peak seasons; so a new recruiting process must be started at the beginning of each season. Qualified people who want permanent employment are not likely to stay with seasonal positions. Developing effective strategies for attracting seasonal employees as well as encouraging them to return each year and stay for the full season is an important role of the manager.

Survey participants were also asked how difficult it is to attract workers of different skill levels. Three classes of workers were identified. The first class is working managers. Working managers have management responsibilities including authority to make decisions and to supervise employees. The second class of workers is independent employees. Independent employees work under limited supervision, possess strong skills related to the job, and make some decisions. The third class is laborer. Laborers work under close supervision, make few if any decisions, and possess basic skills. Forty percent of respondents indicated it was most challenging to attract working managers

Figure 13

Difficulty of Attracting Working Managers,
Independent Employees, and Laborers

Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993*

□ Not difficult   ▦ Somewhat difficult   ■ Very difficult

*The percentages in this figure represent the percentage of respondents for each question. There were 52 applicable responses to the question on working managers, 69 for independent employees, and 71 for laborers. Many respondents did not rate the difficulty of attracting working managers because they did not hire them.

(Figure 13). Over 70 percent of those surveyed indicated that independent employees were either somewhat difficult or very difficult to attract. Laborers were the easiest to attract. The higher the skill level, the more difficult it is to attract those workers to florist crop production jobs. This situation likely reflects the competition for highly skilled and educated workers in an increasingly technology-driven industry. It may also indicate that an effective job market does not exist for these jobs.

Recruitment

Employee recruitment is defined as the process of attracting qualified applicants on a timely basis and in sufficient numbers to apply for jobs within the business. The objective of recruitment is to develop a pool of qualified candidates for the available positions. The larger and better the pool, the greater probability of having one or more outstanding candidates from which to select.

Six recruiting methods are most commonly used by florist crop producers and other small business managers: employee referrals, word of mouth, advertisements in local newspapers, high school and college placement offices, government job services and private employment agencies. The key to developing a strong applicant pool is to select a variety of recruitment methods that are most likely to create a pool of adequate size and to use the recruiting methods selected as effectively as possible.

Employers were asked how frequently they used each of the six recruiting methods when they were attracting applicants to their businesses (Figure 14). Employee referrals and word of mouth were the most frequently used recruiting methods, followed closely by advertisements and high school and college placement offices. Government job services and private agencies were used the least. These last three recruitment methods could be potential recruitment opportunity areas for florist crop producers.

Figure 14

Frequency of Use of Recruitment Methods
72 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

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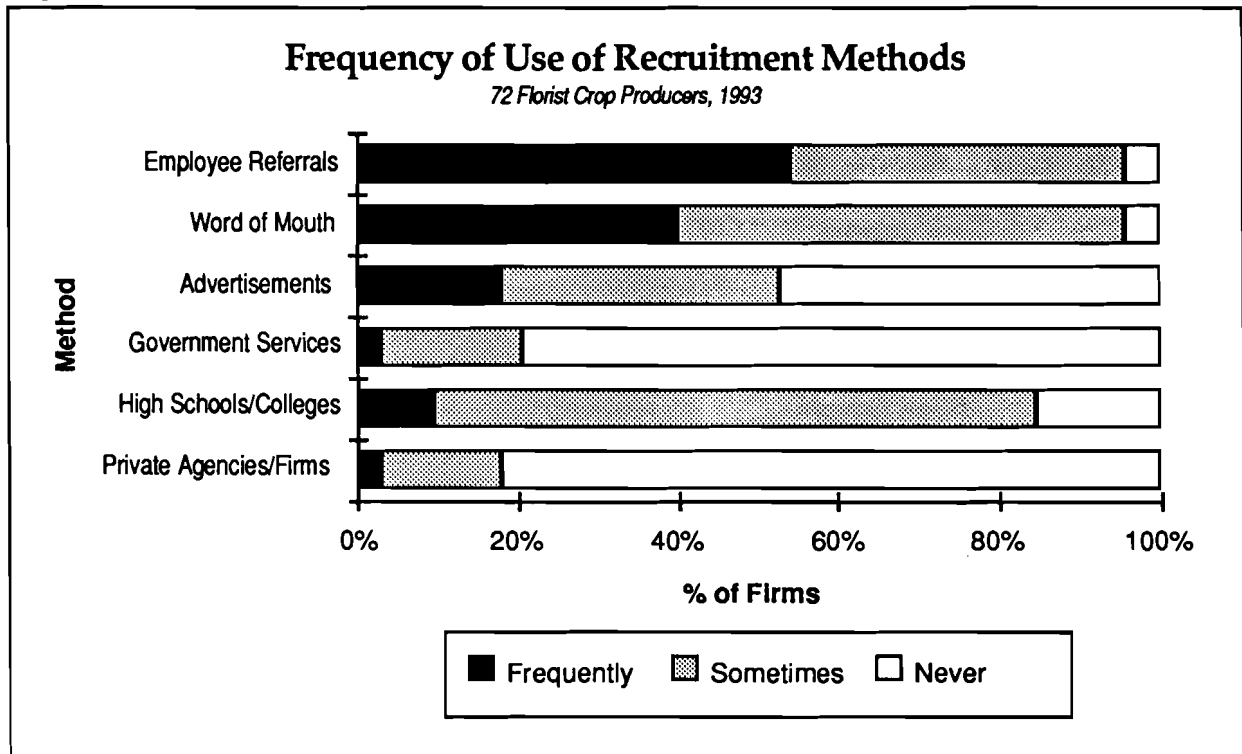
When survey participants indicated that they never used a recruitment method, they were asked, "Why not?" Three percent of the employers surveyed said that they never used referrals from employees because they never get any referrals and because employees usually want their friends to work, which causes problems. Four percent of the respondents indicated that they never used word of mouth because referrals never seemed to work and the applicants are not dependable.

A surprisingly high number of those surveyed, 47 percent, indicated that they never used advertisements in local newspapers. Almost half of the employers who said they never advertise indicated that there was no need, because they had sufficient applicants through other methods. Other respondents who never use this approach indicated that the ads attract too many people who are not qualified, that the wrong type of person responds, and that ads had been unsuccessful in the past.

Many survey participants never use government employment services because they felt no need. They were using alternative recruitment methods. There were a variety of additional responses, including unawareness that government job service had something to offer, bad experiences in the past, and the opportunity to get more qualified workers through other methods.

Fifteen percent of the survey participants indicated that they never use high school or college placement offices for recruiting. The primary reason cited was that they felt no need to use this approach. Another response was that demand for college graduates was high and the student response rate was low.

Eighty one percent of the survey participants indicated that they never use private employment agencies or search firms, and the primary reason given was that there was no need to do so because other alternatives were available. Another group of employers indicated that cost was a factor in not using them. Other employers cited issues of mistrust or unawareness of what an employment agency could do to help them or to help their specific situation. A summary of the reasons why survey respondents didn't use various methods is found in Appendix B.

Managers were asked to rate the effectiveness of the six recruiting methods on a scale of 1 to 5. A rating of 5 indicated a "most effective" method; a rating of 1 indicated a "very ineffective" method. Managers were asked to give each method a rating regardless of whether or not they used it. Perceived effectiveness of recruitment methods (Figure 15) was closely correlated to frequency of use. The more effective managers perceived a particular recruiting method to be, the more likely they were to use it.

Figure 15

Perceived Effectiveness of Recruiting Methods*
Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993*

* Methods were rated on a 5-point scale, with 5 indicating most effective. Number of respondents ranged from 68-72.
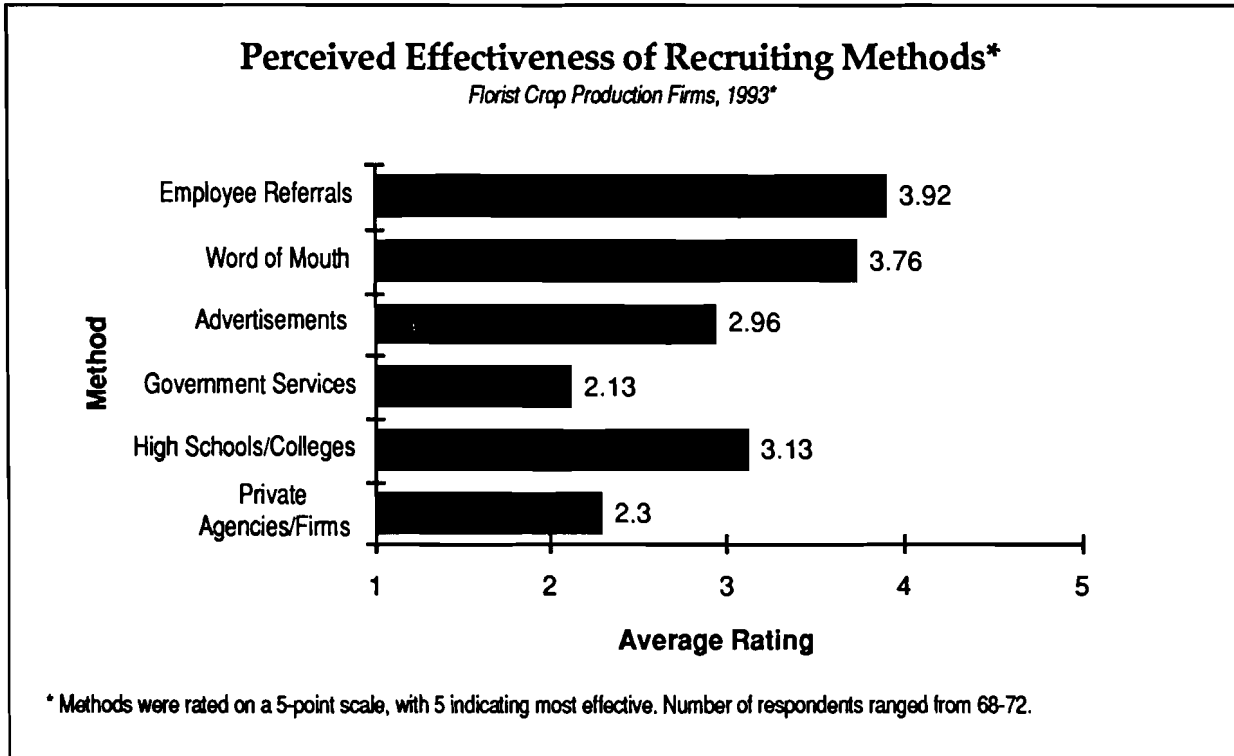
Respondents were divided into two groups, those who used the individual method either frequently or sometimes and those who never used the method. In each case the group that used the method rated it to be substantially more effective than the group that did not use it (Table 6). These results might be expected since managers wouldn't be using a method that they did not think was effective.

Table 6. Perceived Effectiveness of Recruiting Methods by Use

Method	Frequently or Sometimes Use	Never Use
Employee Referrals	4.0	2.3
Word of Mouth	3.9	1.7
Advertisements	3.5	2.4
Government Services	2.9	1.9
High Schools and Colleges	3.2	2.6
Private Agencies	2.8	2.2

*Methods were rated on a 5-point scale, with 5 indicating most effective.

Selection

Selection is defined as the process of choosing from among a group of job applicants the individual or individuals best qualified for the job. The five methods used to gather information about potential job candidates include application forms, interviews, reference checks, trial periods, and skills tests. A high percentage of the employers surveyed used interviews, application forms, and trial periods frequently (Figure 16). Reference checks were used less frequently and skills tests were used infrequently.

Figure 16

Frequency of Use of Selection Methods
72 Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993
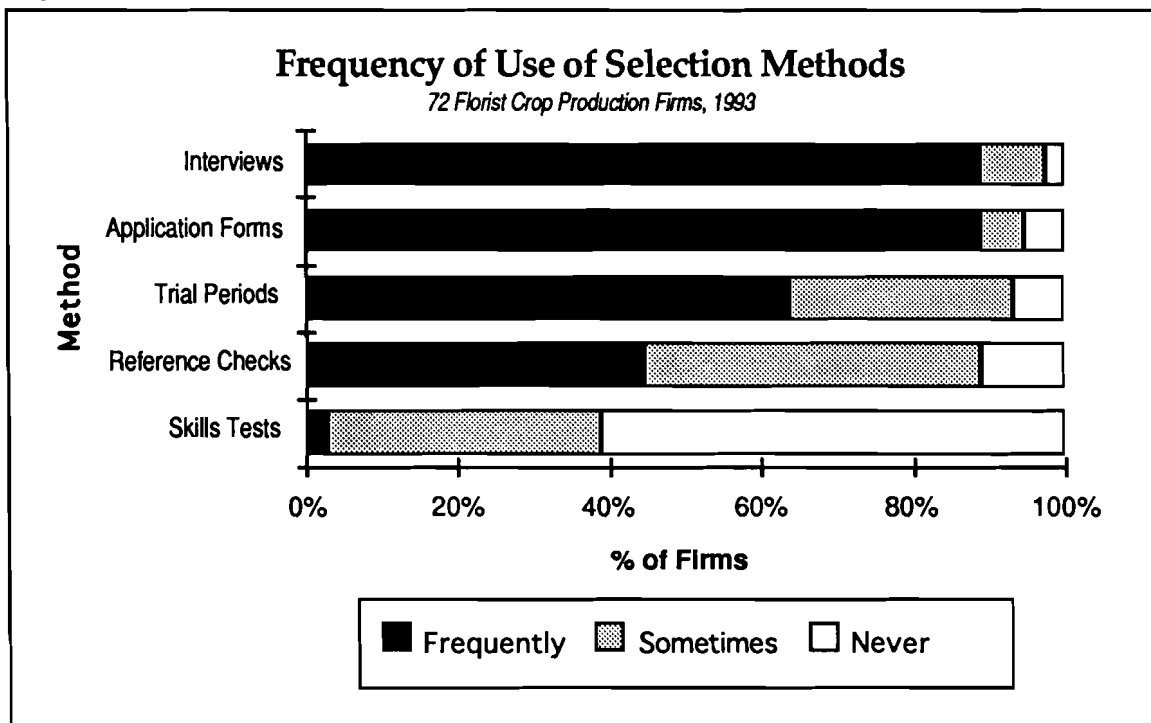
Those who indicated that they never used a particular selection method were asked, "Why not?" Six percent of those surveyed said that they never use application forms. The primary reason given was that they did not hire many people. Eleven percent of those surveyed indicated that they never used reference checks when hiring employees. Of these a few indicated that there was no need for this, since they took referrals from employees. Others responded that the people they hire are local and they know them already, or that they don't hire very many people. Another concern was that people who were called for reference checks did not always give accurate information.

Three percent of those surveyed said that they never used interviews because they don't hire that many people or it is not necessary for laborer jobs. Sixty one percent of those surveyed indicated that they never used skills tests. Many indicated that skills tests were not necessary for labor jobs. Others indicated they assess employee skills on the job, that there was no need for a skills test, or that it would be difficult to set up a skills test.

The majority of the employers used trial periods with lengths ranging from two weeks to 90 days. Only 8 percent said that they never used a trial period. The primary reasons for not using a trial period was that they did not need a trial period, that they do not hire that many people, or that they just don't ask seasonal employees back next year if it doesn't work. For the most part, florist crop producers are using a variety of selection methods in attracting personnel; this speaks well for the industry. Skills tests can be a very effective selection tool, yet 61% of employers surveyed said they never use one. Perhaps there is a need for employer education on how to develop skills tests for specific jobs in florist crop production firms. A summary of these responses is found in Appendix B.

Managers were also asked to assess the effectiveness of each method on a 1 to 5 scale with 5 indicating the most effective method (Figure 17). Interviews were rated most effective, followed by trial periods and application forms. Skills tests received the lowest average effectiveness rating. The interview is an important selection tool, but it is not as reliable at providing concrete information as other selection methods such as reference checks, skills tests, and trial periods. The effectiveness ratings given to selection methods were on average higher than the effectiveness rating given to recruit-

ment methods. Employers apparently feel they are better at selecting employees than at recruiting them. This could be an area of concern. If the recruitment process is not conducted properly, yielding a weak applicant pool, a strong selection process will not compensate for it.

Figure 17

Perceived Effectiveness of Selection Methods*
Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993*

Interviews — 4.33
Application Forms — 3.78
Trial Periods — 3.94
Reference Checks — 3.47
Skills Tests — 3.05

(Method vs. Average Rating, scale 1–5)

* Methods were rated on a 5-point scale, with 5 indicating most effective. Number of respondents ranged from 68-72.
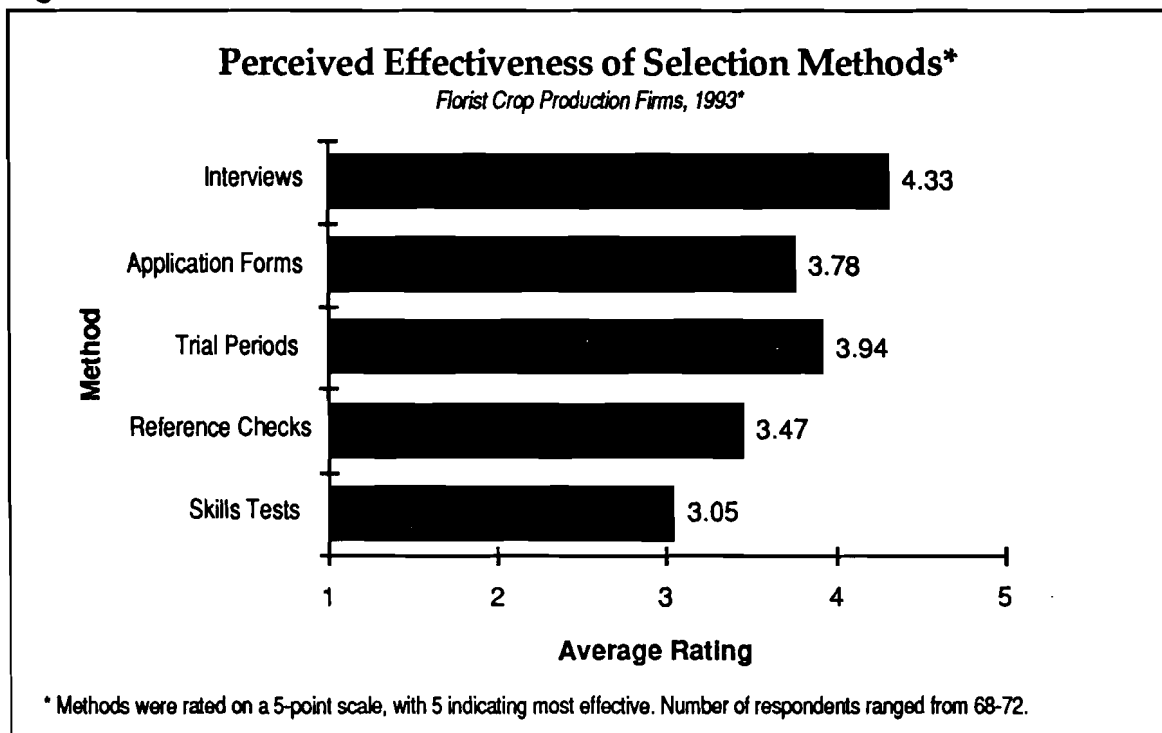
The effectiveness ratings for those who used each selection method as compared to those who did not use them show similar trends to the ratings for recruitment methods. In each case, those who used each method rated it substantially higher than those that did not (Table 7).

Table 7. Perceived Effectiveness of Selection Methods by Use

Method	Average Rating Frequently or Sometimes Use	Never Use
Interviews	4.4	3.5
Applications	3.8	3.5
Trial Periods	4.1	2.4
Reference Checks	3.5	3.0
Skills Tests	3.5	2.7

*Methods were rated on a 5-point scale, with 5 indicating most effective.

33

The interview is not very reliable as a selection tool if it does not gather information specific to the position and gather the same information for each applicant. Using a written set of interview questions and asking each applicant the same questions are ways in which the manager can improve the reliability of the interview process as well as the selection process in general. Using these techniques increases the chances that the "right" person will be selected for the job. To determine how effectively interviews were being used, survey participants were asked how frequently they interviewed with a written set of questions (Figure 18) and how frequently they took care to ask each applicant the same questions (Figure 19).

Figure 18

Frequency of Use of Written Questions in Interviews
72 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Never 34%
Frequently 29%
Sometimes 15%
Seldom 22%

Figure 19

Frequency That Manager Asks Each Applicant Same Questions
72 Florist Crop Producers

Never 8%
Seldom 10%
Sometimes 19%
Frequently 63%
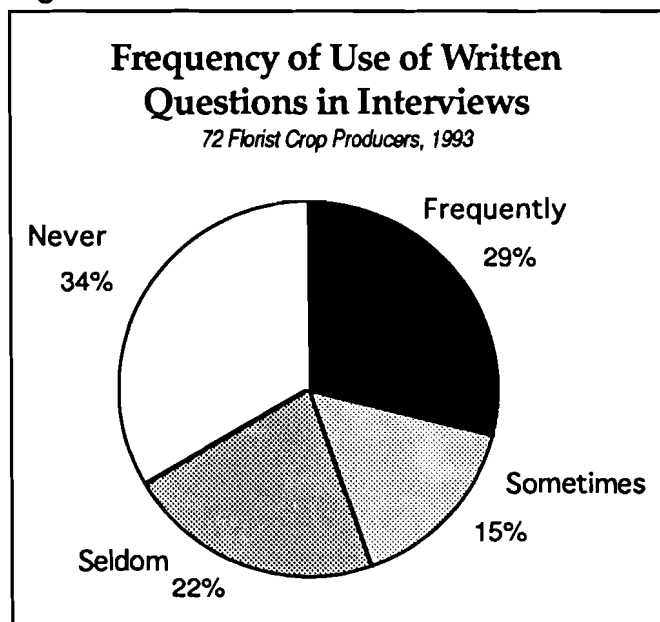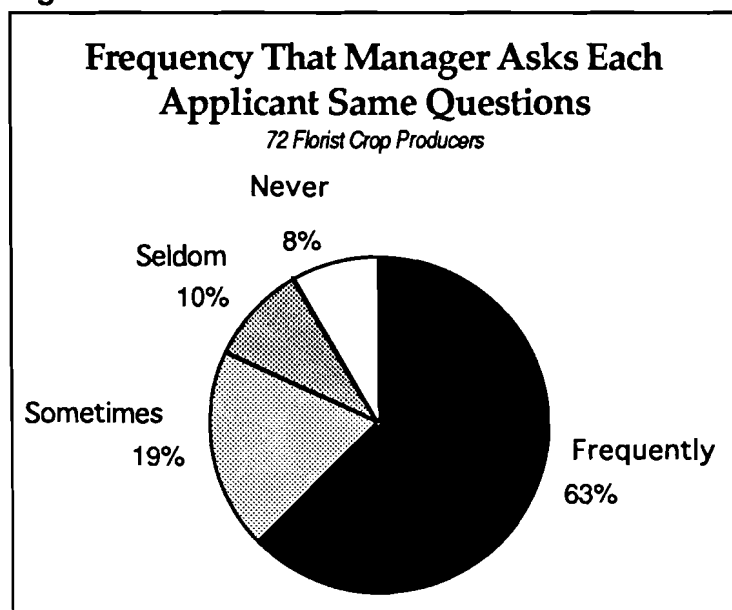
The frequency with which managers used written questions in interviews was disappointing. Fifty five percent said that they used written questions seldom or never. Only 45 percent of the managers used written questions frequently or sometimes. The frequency with which managers asked each applicant the same questions was much better. Only 18 percent said that they seldom or never asked each applicant the same questions, while 82 percent said that they frequently or sometimes did so. The fact that so many managers are taking care to ask each applicant the same questions is a positive sign. If more employers used written questions, the interview process would be even more effective.

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Survey Results Based on Difficulty of Attracting Qualified Applicants

Survey participants were asked how difficult it was to attract qualified workers. Thirty three percent responded that it was not difficult, 49 percent said it was somewhat difficult and 18 percent said it was very difficult. The survey respondents were divided into two groups: a group that said it was not difficult to attract qualified applicants and a group that said it was either somewhat or very difficult. This sort compares the two groups. This approach was expected to reveal differences in procedures between the "not difficult" group and the "difficult" group. The group that found it not difficult to attract workers is likely to be using effective recruitment and selection practices which could be adopted by others in the florist crop production industry. In addition, there might be differences between the business characteristics, such as size of business or size of work force.

37

As described earlier, employees were asked to rank the four factors that made attracting a qualified work force. They included recruitment, selection, compensation, and external factors. Employers who thought attracting qualified workers was very difficult or somewhat difficult ranked recruitment higher than those who thought attracting workers was not difficult (Figure 20). Selection was rated higher by those who felt attracting workers was not difficult (Figure 21). Each grouped ranked compensation similarly, although those who found attracting workers very difficult never ranked compensation last (Figure 22).

Figure 20

Ranking of Recruiting by Difficulty Attracting Qualified Workers
66 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Very Difficult
Somewhat Difficult
Not Difficult

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Ranked first   ▓ Ranked second   ▒ Ranked third   □ Ranked fourth

Figure 21

Ranking of Selection by Difficulty Attracting Qualified Workers
65 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Very Difficult
Somewhat Difficult
Not Difficult

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Ranked first   ▓ Ranked second   ▒ Ranked third   □ Ranked fourth

38

Employers who felt that attracting qualified employees was
not difficult ranked factors outside the business as the most
limiting issue in attracting qualified workers (Figure 23).
Employers who said that attracting qualified workers was
very difficult felt that compensation was the most limiting
factor in attracting qualified workers. Presumably those
employers who do a good job internally with recruitment
and selection see factors in the external environment as
most limiting. Those who say that attracting qualified
workers is very difficult appear to have difficulty providing
competitive wages and benefits.

Figure 22

Ranking of Compensation by Difficulty Attracting Qualified Workers ﹡
67 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

■ Ranked first   ▨ Ranked second   ▨ Ranked third   ☐ Ranked fourth

Figure 23

Ranking of Factors Outside the Business by Difficulty Attracting Qualified Workers
66 Florist Crop Producers

■ Ranked first   ▨ Ranked second   ▨ Ranked third   ☐ Ranked fourth

39
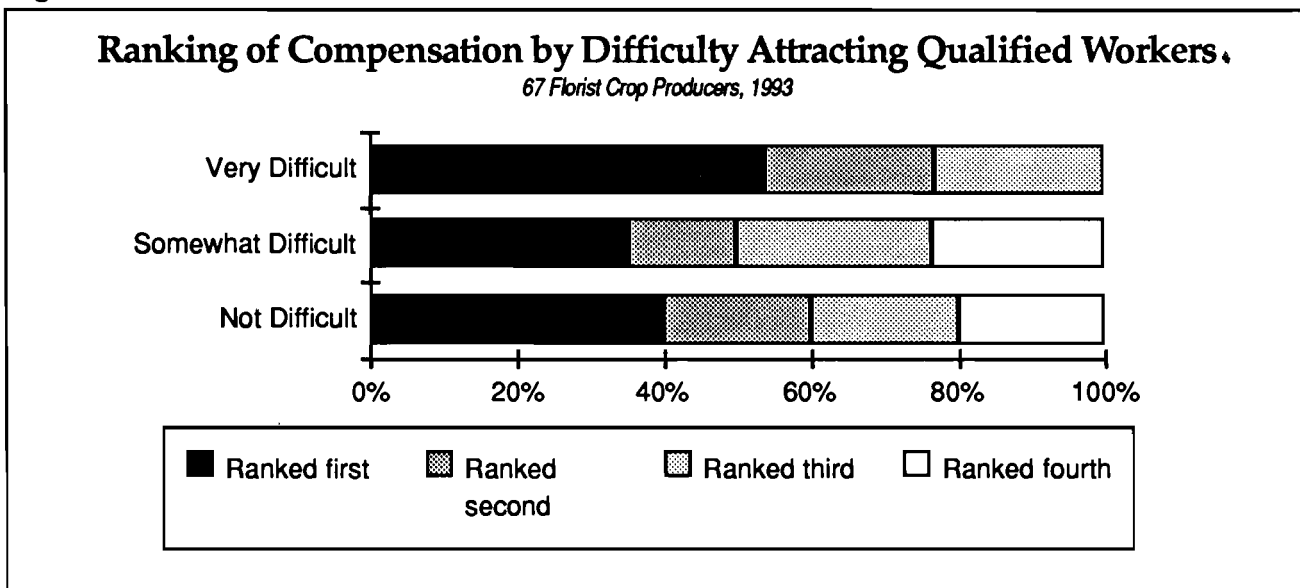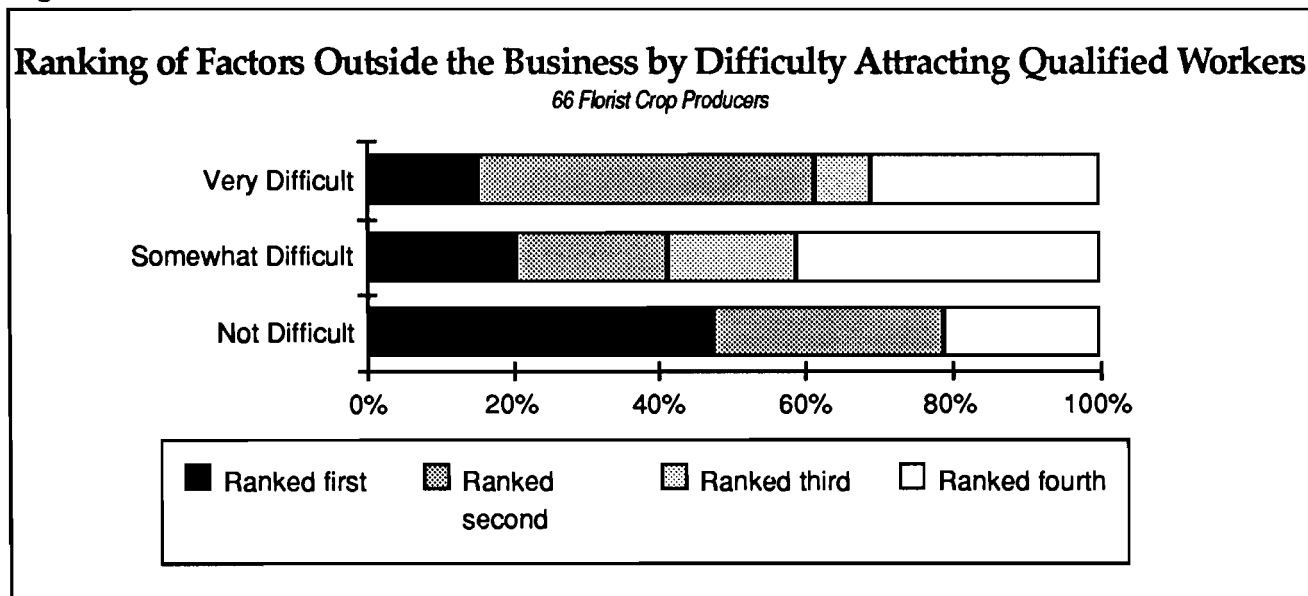
The most difficult class of workers to recruit was perceived to be working managers. Even employers who thought that attracting workers in general was not difficult (42 percent) felt that attracting working managers was difficult (Figure 24). Possible explanations for the difficulty in attracting working managers may include: shortage of trained students coming out of colleges, more attractive employment alternatives, lack of competitive compensation, long hours, and the level of technical and management expertise required. Managers who felt that attracting workers was somewhat difficult (Figure 25) rated attracting laborers as more difficult than those who said attracting qualified applicants is very difficult (Figure 26).

Figure 24

Difficulty of Attracting Types of Positions for Managers Who Said Attracting Qualified Applicants is Not Difficult
19-24 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Legend: ■ Very Difficult   ▨ Somewhat Difficult   ☐ Very Difficult

Figure 25

Difficulty of Attracting Types of Positions for Managers Who Said Attracting Qualified Applicants is Somewhat Difficult
24-36 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Legend: ■ Very Difficult   ▨ Somewhat Difficult   ☐ Not Difficult

40

Figure 26

Difficulty of Attracting Types of Positions for Managers Who Said Attracting Qualified Applicants is Very Difficult

9-13 Florist Crop Producers, 1993

Employers who said it was not difficult to attract qualified workers reported the greatest tendency to never use many of the recruiting practices (Table 8). This is particularly true of the use of government job services and private employment agencies. Employers who are not having difficulty attracting workers are not likely to use more formalized or time-consuming recruitment methods since they do not appear to need them.

Table 8. Employers Who *Never* Use Various Recruiting Methods

Recruiting Method	Percentage Who Never Use		
	Not Difficult to Attract Workers	Somewhat Difficult to Attract Workers	Very Difficult to Attract Workers
Employee Referrals	4.2	0	15.4
Word of Mouth	8.3	2.9	0
Advertisements	54.2	45.7	38.5
Government Employment Services	75.0	80.0	84.6
High Schools or Colleges	33.3	5.7	7.7
Private Employment Agencies	87.5	80.0	76.9

41

When the use of recruitment and selection practices was compared between employers who said attracting qualified applicants was "not difficult," those who said it was "somewhat difficult," and those who said it was "very difficult," the responses were very similar. Likewise, there was no substantial difference between the groups in the effectiveness ratings for both recruitment and selection.

A significant difference between the three groups was in the average size of production facility. Employers who thought it was not difficult to attract workers had an average production facility size of 10.2 acres, while facilities of those who rated it somewhat difficult averaged 7.4 acres, and facilities of those who said "very difficult" averaged 2.2 acres. There was no clear trend in the average number of total FTEs in the three groups.

Obvious differences were also observed when employers were asked how satisfied their employees were with their jobs. Seventy four percent of the "not difficult" group said employees were very satisfied while only 46 percent of the "somewhat difficult" group and 31 percent of the "very difficult" group said their employees were very satisfied with their jobs.

There were also noticeable differences in how satisfied they were with the quality of their workers. Seventy eight percent of the "not difficult" group said that they were very satisfied with the quality of their workers, while only 57 percent of the "somewhat difficult" group and 46 percent of the "very difficult" group said they were very satisfied with the quality of their workers.

Employers who said attracting workers was not difficult were more satisfied with turnover than the other two groups. Seventy four percent of the "not difficult" group reported that they were very satisfied with employee turnover, compared to 66 percent of the "somewhat difficult" group and 46 percent of the "very difficult" group.

In short, employers who reported that attracting qualified workers was not difficult were more likely to report that they were very satisfied with the quality of their workers and employee turnover and that their employees were very satisfied with their jobs.

The answers to these three questions suggest that the "not difficult" group of growers may have established excellent reputations as employers which make it easy for them to recruit. The fact that they are larger and may be able to provide better compensation and opportunity for advancement may also have an impact.

Survey Results Based on Size of Business

Two previous studies, one in small business (Hornsby and Kuratko, 1990) and one in the florist crop production industry (Maloney and Milligan, 1992), have revealed that as businesses grow in size, there is a tendency to adopt more formal human resource management practices. To determine if this was also true in this study, the survey participants were divided into two size groups based on the number of FTEs employed in the business. Survey participants were divided into equal groups of 36. The small business group consisted of growers who employed less than 12.5 FTEs. The large group consisted of employers who employed 12.5 or more FTEs.

There were dramatic differences between the size of businesses studied. For example, the production facilities of businesses in the large group averaged more than 6 times the size of the small group. Likewise, the average number of FTEs in the large businesses was more than 7 times the number of FTEs in the small group. These size differences reflect the great variation between smaller and larger businesses within the florist crop production industry as a whole. These data also suggest a difference in personnel management needs between larger producers and smaller producers.

Table 9, found at the end of this section, shows the re-

sponses to the survey questions when the survey respon-
dents are divided into these two groups. For some ques-
tions there is very little difference. For others there is ap-
preciable difference between the two. When employers
were asked how difficult it was for them to attract qualified
job applicants, 28 percent of the small business managers
said that it was very difficult, while only 8 percent of the
large business managers said it was very difficult. When
employers were asked how difficult it was to hire employ-
ees of three different classifications, there were also differ-
ences. Sixty one percent of employers in small firms indi-
cated that it was very difficult to hire working managers,
while only 41 percent of employers in large firms reported it
was very difficult to hire working managers.

When small and large business employers were asked how
frequently they use the six recruitment methods, in most
cases employers in large businesses used the different
recruitment methods "frequently" more often than the
small business employers used recruitment methods "fre-
quently" (Figure 27). Exceptions to this were government
employment services, where 3 percent of each group said
that they use government employment services. The sec-

Figure 27

Managers Who Frequently Use Recruitment Methods,
by Size of Work Force

72 Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993

44
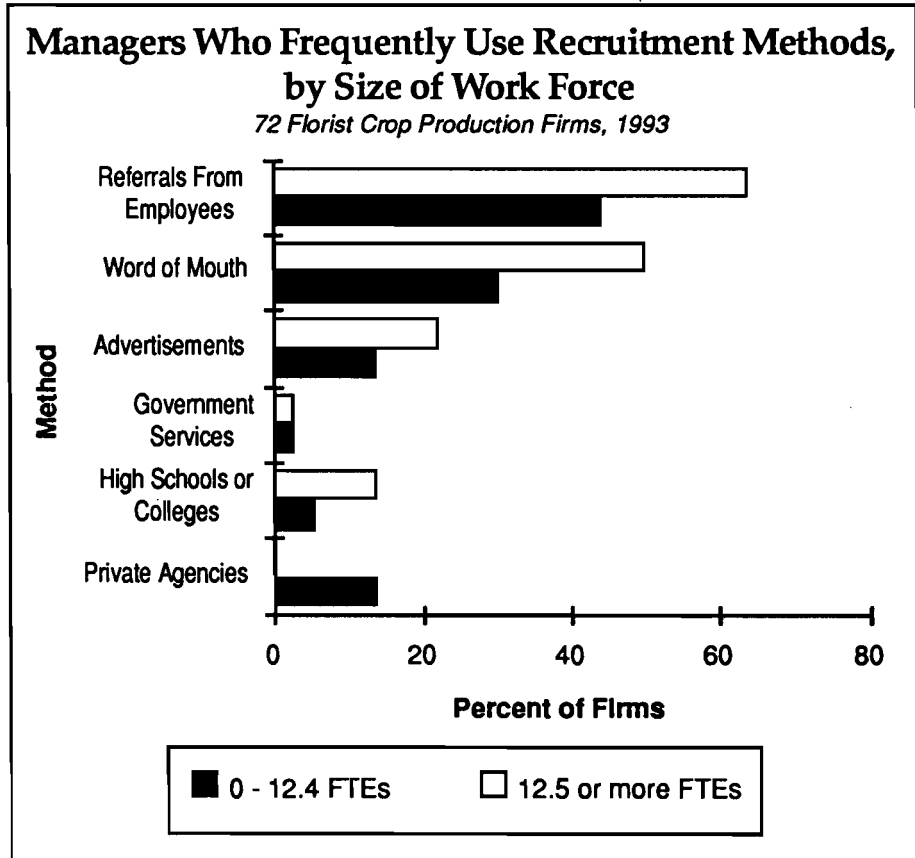
ond exception was in the use of private employment agencies. Six percent of the smaller businesses said that they used private agencies frequently, while none of the larger business employers said that they used them frequently.

When the effectiveness ratings of recruitment methods were compared betweeen the two groups there was no clear trend. However, the most commonly used recruitment methods among all managers, employee referrals and word of mouth, were perceived to be more effective by the managers of large firms.

Similar results on the use of selection methods were found as with use of recruitment methods (Figure 28). In the case

Figure 28

Managers Who Frequently Use Selection Methods, by Size of Business

72 Florist Crop Production Firms, 1993
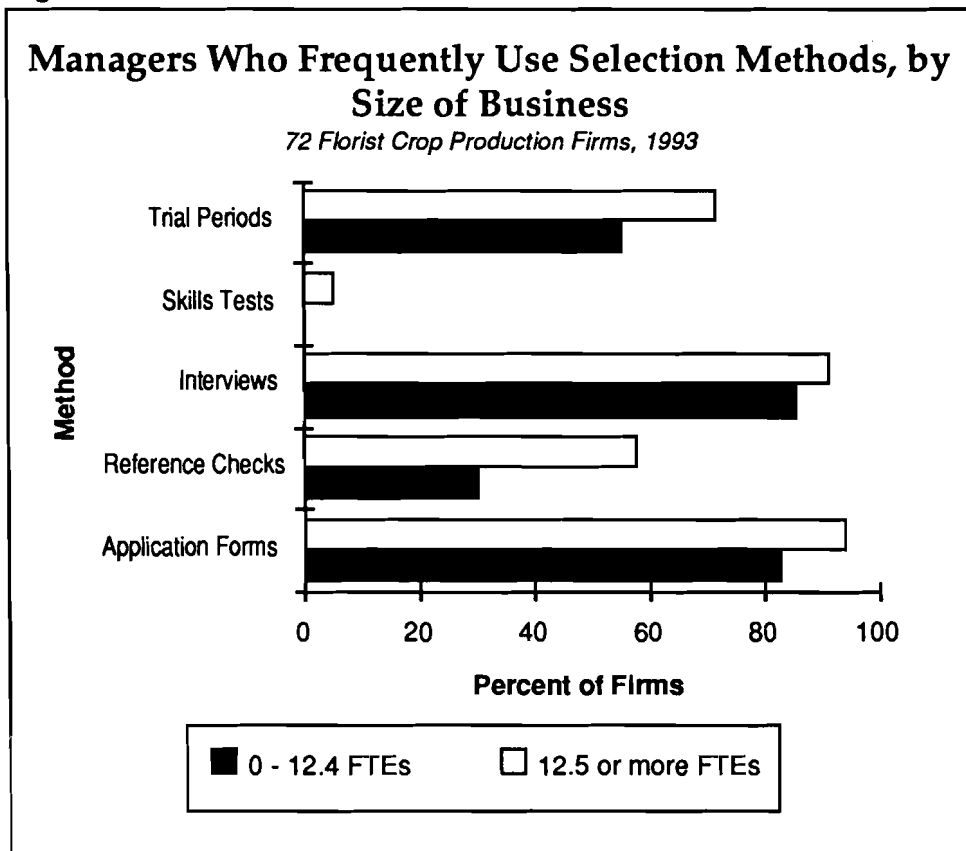
of each selection method, larger businesses used the methods more frequently than did smaller businesses.

When effectiveness ratings of selection methods of the two size groups were compared, there was very little difference in perceptions.

Two questions focused on employee satisfaction. When employers were asked, how satisfied employees are with

their jobs and how satisfied employees are with their wages and benefits, in both cases, the percentage of the employers who responded "very satisfied" was greater for smaller businesses than for larger businesses. The larger businesses in this study tended to use more formalized recruitment and selection methods and other related personnel practices more frequently than did smaller businesses. These results are consistent with studies done by Maloney & Milligan (1992) and Hornsby & Kuratko (1990).

Table 9. Survey Response by Size of Business
*all numbers are percentages, unless otherwise noted

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Type of Business		
Production and wholesale marketing	27.8	41.7
Production and retail marketing	22.2	13.9
Production, wholesale, and retail marketing	50	44.4
Average size of production facility, in square feet	63,290	470,146
Average FTEs		
Average full-time year-round non-family workers, in FTEs	2.61	43.78
Average part-time year-round non-family workers, in FTEs	1.21	4.15
Average full-time seasonal non-family workers, in FTEs	1.4	9.87
Average part-time seasonal non-family workers, in FTEs	.76	1.36
Average total of non-family workers, in FTEs	5.98	59.16
Average full-time year-round family workers, in FTEs	2.3	3.75
Average part-time year-round family workers, in FTEs	.22	.32
Average full-time seasonal family workers, in FTEs	.08	.14
Average part-time seasonal family workers, in FTEs	.06	.05
Average total of family workers, in FTEs	2.64	4.25
Average total of FTEs per business	8.62	63.41
Proportion of work force that is full-time	74.0	86.2
Proportion of work force that is year-round	71.7	72.2
How Often Employee Pay is Based on What Other Employers Pay		
Never	30.6	27.8
Sometimes	66.7	66.7
Frequently	2.8	5.6
Managers' Perceptions of Employee Satisfaction With Wages and Benefits		
Very satisfied	19.4	11.1
Somewhat satisfied	72.2	83.3
Not satisfied	8.3	5.6

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Managers' Perceptions of Employees' Satisfaction With Their Jobs		
Very satisfied	55.6	48.6
Somewhat satisfied	44.4	51.4
Not satisfied	0	0
Managers' Perceptions of How Employees View Working Conditions in the Industry		
Very favorable	20.6	16.7
Somewhat favorable	13.5	77.8
Not very favorable	5.9	5.6
Manager Satisfaction With Quality of Workers		
Very satisfied	66.7	57.1
Somewhat satisfied	30.6	42.9
Not satisfied	2.8	0
Manager Satisfaction With Employee Turnover		
Very satisfied	71.4	58.3
Somewhat satisfied	20.0	33.3
Not satisfied	8.6	8.3
Average Ranking of Limiting Aspects of Attracting Job Applicants*		
Recruitment	2.91	2.33
Selection	2.70	2.76
Compensation	2.21	2.18
Factors outside	2.5	2.52
*The lower the number, the more it is perceived as a barrier		
Difficulty of Attracting Qualified Job Applicants		
Not difficult	33.3	33.3
Somewhat difficult	38.9	58.3
Very difficult	27.8	8.3
Difficulty of Attracting Seasonal and Year-Round Employees		
Seasonal are more difficult to attract	32.4	38.2
Year-round are more difficult to attract	14.7	17.7
They are equally difficult to attract	52.9	44.1

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Difficulty of Attracting Working Managers		
Not difficult	11.1	17.7
Somewhat difficult	27.8	41.2
Very difficult	61.1	41.2
Number of applicable responses	18	34
Difficulty of Attracting Independent Employees		
Not difficult	23.5	25.7
Somewhat difficult	61.8	68.6
Very difficult	14.7	5.7
Difficulty of Attracting Laborers		
Not difficult	69.4	71.4
Somewhat difficult	25	17.1
Very difficult	5.6	11.4
Frequency of Use of Recruitment Methods		
Referrals from employees		
Frequently	44.4	63.9
Sometimes	50	33.3
Never	5.6	2.8
Word of mouth		
Frequently	30.6	50
Sometimes	63.9	47.2
Never	5.6	2.8
Advertisements		
Frequently	13.9	22.2
Sometimes	27.8	41.7
Never	58.3	36.1
Government employment services		
Frequently	2.8	2.8
Sometimes	8.3	27.8
Never	88.9	69.4
High schools or colleges		
Frequently	5.6	13.9
Sometimes	72.2	77.8
Never	22.2	8.3

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Private employment agencies		
Frequently	5.6	0
Sometimes	8.3	22.2
Never	86.1	77.8
Perceived Effectiveness of Recruitment Methods*		
Referrals from employees	3.79	4.17
Word of mouth	3.66	4.03
Advertisements	3.53	3.44
Government employment services	3.25	2.82
High schools or colleges	3.29	3.17
Private employment agencies	3.10	2.57

*The lower the number, the more effective the method. Ratings are only for those who use these methods.

Frequency of Use of Selection Methods

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Application forms		
Frequently	83.3	94.4
Sometimes	5.6	5.6
Never	11.1	0
Reference Checks		
Frequently	30.6	58.3
Sometimes	55.6	33.3
Never	13.9	8.3
Interviews		
Frequently	86.1	91.7
Sometimes	11.1	5.6
Never	2.8	2.8
Skills tests		
Frequently	0	5.6
Sometimes	27.8	44.4
Never	72.2	50
Trial periods		
Frequently	55.6	72.2
Sometimes	33.3	25
Never	11.1	2.8

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Perceived Effectiveness of Selection Methods*		
Application forms	3.91	3.68
Reference checks	3.50	3.56
Interviews	4.34	4.37
Skills Tests	3.30	3.61
Trial Periods	4.03	4.09

*The lower the number, the more effective the method. Ratings are only for those who use these methods.

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Frequency of Use of Written Questions in Interviews		
Frequently	16.7	41.7
Sometimes	16.7	13.9
Seldom	25	19.44
Never	16.7	25

	0-12.4 FTEs	12.5 or more FTEs
Frequency That Manager Asks Each Applicant the Same Questions		
Frequently	52.8	722
Sometimes	25	13.9
Seldom	8.3	11.1
Never	13.9	2.8

Conclusions

This study found that two-thirds of florist crop producers think attracting qualified applicants is somewhat or very difficult. Generally speaking, the greater the qualifications required for the position, the more difficult it is to attract qualified applicants. When given four options, managers chose recruitment and compensation as the practices that are most limiting in attracting job applicants. Therefore, it is appropriate to look further at the issues of recruitment and compensation to determine where florist crop producers can improve their ability to attract qualified workers.

The importance of recruitment cannot be understated. Recruitment errors from lack of time invested in the process or using recommended practices ineffectively or incompletely are likely lead to long-term human resource management problems. Hiring the wrong person can result in high turnover, poor productivity, and ongoing supervisory difficulties. By far the most frequently used recruitment methods are employee referrals and word of mouth as shown by this study and backed up by the 1992 study (Maloney and Milligan). These two methods are informal: they require minimal effort on the part of managers. Often, using these two methods is sufficient for many managers and produce enough qualified applicants to select among them. However, since two-thirds of the managers in this study are dissatisfied with how many qualified people they are attracting to the business, other more formal recruit-

ment methods should be used more frequently than they currently are. Using methods such as advertisements, employment services, and high school and college recruitment offices can generate a pool of qualified applicants when the less formal methods are not sufficient. Managers who are not completely satisfied with how well they are attracting qualified people should use these more formal methods to broaden their applicant search and increase the likelihood of generating a pool which contains at least some highly qualified applicants. It is important to recruit more than one qualified applicant for the position to ensure that the employer has a choice between several very qualified applicants.

Managers perceived that compensation was another key issue in attracting qualified workers. While this study did not focus specifically on compensation issues, some recommendations can be made. In attracting workers, employers must offer *competitive* wages and benefits if they hope to attract workers that are as good as those that other employers hire. If employers want better workers than those of other employers, they must offer better wages and benefits. The most appropriate way that managers can determine how their compensation package compares to that of other employers is by conducting a salary survey. More than two-thirds of the producers in this study do have an idea of how their employees' wages compare to other employers (Figure 2 in "Results"). They likely recognize the importance of wage rates in attracting the best workers. The one-third of respondents who do not base wage rates on what others pay should begin conducting salary surveys to determine how competitive their wages are and if this may be a reason why they have trouble attracting qualified employees. Some employers may say that they do not pay competitively because they cannot afford it. In this case the employer must focus on developing a profitable business which will provide competitive employee compensation in the future. Failing to provide competitive compensation inhibits recruitment and selection by deterring potential applicants from applying.

The remainder of this section follows the objectives established in the introduction. Each objective is restated and then the conclusions relating to that objective are summarized.

Objective 1. To prioritize the key issues in attracting a qualified work force for the florist crop production industry.

A review of the literature and the authors' prior experience with human resource management issues in small business have revealed four key issues which impact a small business employer's success in attracting qualified workers. Those issues include recruitment, selection, compensation, and external factors, i.e. factors outside the business largely beyond the control of the employer, such as labor markets, government regulations and qualifications of workers.

Employers feel that their ability to pay competitive wages and benefits has a great impact on their success at attracting qualified workers. This is consistent with our 1992 study of human resource management resource practices in florist crop production firms. In that study, 60 percent of the participants identified compensation issues as the greatest personnel challenge they will face over the next three years (Maloney and Milligan, 1992). Florist crop producers must continue to emphasize managing their businesses for profitability to ensure that they will be able to attract the best people and compensate them well.

In addition to compensation, recruitment was viewed as a human resource management weakness by many employers. Therefore, continued emphasis must be placed on the recruiting process. A wider variety of recruitment practices should be utilized and they should be used more effectively and creatively to ensure a large and qualified pool of applicants.

Factors outside the business were also seen as a barrier to recruiting employees, yet these issues are, for the most part, beyond the control of the employer. While external factors are perceived as important to florist crop producers, they should not be used as an excuse for the inability to attract good workers. Rather, external factors should be understood by the manager and adjustments should be made within the business to account for those factors. For example, if a business is having difficulty attracting middle managers, then possible internal adjustments may be made, rather than blaming the problem on some external factor: "Nobody wants to do this kind of work any more." These solutions might include training employees from within to

accept these positions, adjusting the recruiting program to use more recruiting methods, or targeting the recruiting effort toward potential middle management employees.

Selection was viewed as the least limiting factor. This is understandable, since it is relatively easy to select the appropriate person for the job if the recruiting process successfully attracts a pool of applicants which contains some highly qualified people.

Objective 2. To determine the recruitment and selection procedures used by florist crop producers and their frequency of use, and to determine the perceived effectiveness of recruitment and selection procedures.

Of the six commonly used recruitment methods, employee referrals and word of mouth were the most frequently used by survey participants, followed by advertisements in local newspapers, recruiting at high schools and colleges, government job services, and private recruiting agencies. It is understandable that employee referrals and word of mouth would be the most frequently used recruitment methods since they are low cost and require a small time commitment from the employer. Their usefulness, however, is limited if these methods fail to create a pool of applicants which contain individuals sufficiently qualified to do the job. When these two methods fail to be effective, the other four methods offer recruiting alternatives. Increased use of these four recruiting methods is an important area of opportunity for the florist crop production industry.

It is surprising that almost half of the survey participants never used advertisements in local papers to recruit employees. Some of the employers indicated that there was no need to use advertisements since they already had a sufficient pool of candidates through other means. However, others indicated that ads attract too many of the wrong type of people, many of whom are not qualified, have low skill level,s or other work-related problems. These issues can be addressed by doing a better job with recruitment advertising. Writing more complete and creative ads, placing them in areas where more applicants are likely to see them, and using screening devices. Using post office box numbers and specifying minimum qualifications can make advertising a

more effective recruitment tool. Advertising is a recruitment method that should be used more frequently and more effectively because of its potential to attract a large applicant pool. Recruiting in high schools and colleges is used by a majority of participants and should be encouraged as a tool for seeking workers with specific skills, especially those that college graduates have.

Government job services, while having a few limitations, could be used far more by the florist crop production industry than they are. Most states have a job service as a part of their department of labor. Trained professionals are available to aid in writing position announcements and screening applicants. At times, local job services have been criticized for not sending qualified applicants; however, for those who have never used this approach it may provide a helpful recruiting alternative. A majority of the survey participants never use private employment agencies. Many indicated that they do not need this type of service. Others cited cost as a major barrier. Employment agencies or search firms can be very effective methods of recruitment, especially when recruiting for highly qualified positions, such as management or technical production positions. Working managers were found in this study to be the most difficult segment of the work force to hire. Use of search firms or private employment agencies could be extremely helpful in solving recruiting problems. For those florist crop producers who find it difficult to attract qualified workers, using methods other than employee referrals and word of mouth is recommended. When using other recruitment methods, the time and effort must be invested to ensure that they are used effectively.

Employer perceptions of the effectiveness of specific recruiting methods were consistent with the use of the methods. Those recruitment methods that were used frequently were rated higher than those recruitment methods that were used much less. Recruitment methods in order of their perceived effectiveness from most effective to least effective are as follows: employee referrals, word of mouth, high school and college recruitment, advertisements, private agencies and firms, and government services. It is interesting that advertisements in local papers were rated only fourth in perceived effectiveness. Again, this raises the question of how effectively advertisements are being written and utilized to create a pool of qualified applicants.

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The selection process appears to be less difficult than the recruitment process for the florist crop producers in this study. The frequency of use of the five most common selection methods was substantially greater than for the six recruitment methods. In addition, the perceived effectiveness ratings for the selection methods were greater than the perceived effectiveness ratings for the recruiting methods. The selection methods, in order of their frequency of use from most frequently used to least frequently used, are interviews, application forms, trial periods, reference checks, and skills tests. It appears that the process of choosing from among a group of applicants those best qualified for the job is easier than the recruiting process which requires attracting a group of qualified applicants. Florist crop producers appear to utilize more selection methods and perceive them as more effective than recruiting methods. However, time and effort devoted to the selection process can only be effective and result in the best people hired if the recruitment process is successful. Efforts to attract more qualified applicants to the florist crop production industry should focus more on the recruiting process than the selection process, based on the findings of this study.

Less than 40 percent of the study participants ever used skills tests in selecting employees for their business. This appears to be an area of opportunity in the selection process. Simple tests such as transplanting or equipment operation could be devised to determine if employees have the basic skills to do the job. There also appears to be opportunity to improve the interview process. One third of the survey participants indicated that they never used written questions in interviews. Eighteen percent said that they seldom or never asked each applicant the same questions. The interview process can be much more reliable if employers take care to use a written set of questions and be sure to ask each individual the same questions.

Objective 3. To compare recruitment and selection practices between those who do and do not have difficulty attracting workers.

Firms that did not have difficulty attracting qualified job applicants possessed a number of characteristics different from the group who said it was somewhat difficult or very difficult to attract qualified job applicants. Those who did not find it difficult to attract job applicants tended to have

larger businesses and ranked the barriers to attracting qualified applicants differently than those who found attracting applicants difficult. The "not difficult" group said that the factors outside the business were the greatest barrier to attracting qualified job applicants, followed by compensation, selection, and recruitment. Those who did find attracting applicants difficult said that compensation and recruitment were the greatest barriers to attracting qualified applicants. In addition, over the half of the "not difficult" group said they never used advertisements in local newspapers to recruit applicants. Those who said they had difficulty recruiting job applicants used advertisements more frequently. Those firms that did not have difficulty recruiting applicants very likely saw no need to use advertisements because other approaches to recruiting were successful. The "not difficult" group indicated that their employees were very satisfied with their jobs by a much greater margin than the "difficult" group. Likewise, a higher percentage of the "not difficult" group said that their employees were very satisfied with the wages and benefits they received. Employers who did not have difficulty attracting qualified applicants were more likely to report that they were very satisfied with the quality of their workers, and that they were very satisfied with employee turnover in the business. While the study is not explicit about all of the management techniques used by the group who said that attracting employees was not difficult, it is very likely that the "not difficult" employers are using human resource management practices more effectively and have a better reputation as employers than the group who said it was more difficult to attract qualified workers.

Objective 4. To determine the types of positions that are most difficult to fill.

Survey participants clearly felt that the position of working manager was the most difficult position in the business to fill, followed by independent workers and laborers. Efforts to improve recruitment in the florist crop production industry should focus on attracting working managers and independent employees, since these positions are most critical to the business and are most difficult to find qualified applicants for. Again, more effective use of lesser used recruitment methods is recommended. In addition, training employees from within to take on more responsibilities and to receive promotions is another approach that is recommended.

The study also examined whether seasonal or year-round employees were more difficult to recruit. Almost half indicated that they were about the same difficulty. Of the remaining half, more participants felt that seasonal employees were more difficult to recruit than year-round employees. While the recruiting of seasonal employees did not emerge as a major issue, special attention through educational programs could be placed on the unique issues involved in recruiting seasonal employees and encouraging the best seasonal employees to return year after year.

Objective 5. To determine the differences between the recruitment and selection practices of larger firms and smaller firms.

When the study group was divided by size based on the number of full-time equivalent workers (FTEs), differences were evident. The smaller firms had less than 12.5 FTEs and the larger firms had 12.5 or more FTEs in their work force. Growers from smaller firms indicated that it was more difficult to attract qualified job applicants and more difficult to attract working managers. Larger firms tended to be more formalized in their recruitment and selection practices. They tended to use any given recruiting practice more frequently than smaller firms. Likewise, larger firms used more formalized selection practices, including application forms, reference checks, interviews, skills tests, and trial periods. In each case, the larger businesses used these selection practices more frequently than smaller businesses. In addition, larger businesses also used a more formalized interview process more frequently using a written list of questions and by taking care to ask each applicant the same questions. Also, the size of production facilities is substantially higher for the larger businesses than for the smaller businesses, as well as the size of work force being substantially greater for larger businesses than smaller businesses. These results are consistent with results from previous studies that indicate as firms grow in size, they tend to use more formalized human resource management practices. As firms grow in size and recruitment and selection challenges increase, it is recommended that they use more recruitment and selection practices and use them more effectively.

Objective 6. To make recommendations to florist crop producers regarding the recruitment and selection of employees.

The recommendations that follow are based on the findings in this study, which has been limited in its scope of reviewing recruitment and selection issues. In addition to compensation, there are other human resource management issues that will impact the ability of businesses to attract workers, including the relationship between the employer and the employee, the opportunity for an employee's personal growth, the "culture" of the business, among others. The following areas of improvement should be considered by members of the florist crop production industry.

1. **Improve recruitment procedures.** Recruitment is one of the greatest issue affecting the firms' ability to attract qualified people. A greater variety of recruitment methods should be used and they should be used more creatively in an effort to create the best pool of applicants. It is not sufficient to create a pool of applicants; a sound recruiting effort must create a pool of applicants which will contain at least several individuals who are very qualified to do the job.

2. **Examine the competitiveness of wage and benefit packages provided to employees.** Growers view this as one of the greatest barriers to attracting qualified workers. Employers should determine what prevailing wage rates are within their industry and geographic area and use those rates as a guide in deciding wage levels within their businesses. The value of a competitive compensation package should not be underestimated as a means of attracting and retaining good workers. Keeping workers employed long-term means that employers will have to encounter recruitment problems less often. And as much as improving recruitment and selection procedures may help attract qualified people to the business, the issue of competitive wages and benefits will always be very important to the applicant.

3. **Greater attention should be focused on attracting working managers to the industry.** Working managers are viewed as the most difficult class of employee to attract. Growers should improve their ability to fill management positions. One strategy which can be considered is to place greater emphasis on developing career paths within the individual business, developing middle managers and promoting them over a period of time. A second industry-wide strategy includes working

with land-grant and technical colleges to encourage young people to seek professional opportunities in the florist crop production industry.

4. **Develop educational programs on employee recruitment.** This study shows that florist crop producers tend to use very informal recruiting practices, such as word of mouth and employee referrals. The more formal methods, advertisements, government employment services, high school or college placement offices, and private employment agencies, can be highly effective forms of recruitment. These should be considered by employers having difficulty attracting qualified workers. It is likely that the reason these more formal recruitment practices are not being adopted is that managers are unaware of how to implement these practices and the benefits that can be derived from using them effectively. In addition, the low effectiveness ratings of recruitment methods given by florist crop producers may indicate that the methods are not being used as effectively as possible. Industry-wide education programs focusing on recruiting qualified workers would benefit the industry and help employers become more competitive in the job market and hire more productive individuals.

5. **Continue applied research.** This is the second Cornell study focusing on staffing practices in the florist crop production industry. In both cases the studies focused on perceptions of and practices used by greenhouse managers. A future area of opportunity lies in the study of employees' perceptions and views regarding greenhouse employment. In addition, further research about the human resource management practices of those employers who reported that they do not have difficulty attracting workers could identify characteristics of effective recruiters and be used to provide insight to the managers who have difficulty attracting workers. Such studies could further enhance our understanding of how to make positive improvements in human resource management within the industry.

Appendix A
Survey Instrument

CORNELL
UNIVERSITY

New York State College of
Agriculture and Life Sciences

Department of Agricultural Economics

Warren Hall   Facsimile: 607 255-9984
Ithaca, NY 14853-7801
USA

February 22, 1993

Name
Company
Address
Address

Dear *Name*:

We would like to invite you to be a part of a pioneering reasearch study to gather information on employee recruitment and selection practices in florist crop production firms. This study is funded by the American Floral Endowment and will be conducted by Cornell University. The survey will include producers from four of the largest northern florist crop production states, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. We will call you sometime this week to ask you to participate. First, however, we want to explain the purpose and importance of the study and why we are asking you to participate.
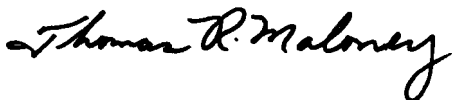
In 1992 AFE funded a study of human resource management practices used by northern florist crop producers. This year our research will focus on the issue of attracting a qualified work force. Results of this survey will be used to assess the recruitment and selection needs of florist crop producers, and to determine educational strategies which will help producers meet current and future human resource mangement challenges. This is a pioneering effort because, other than the general study conducted last year, information of this type is presently unavailable. Your participation will provide new and valuable information about the practices, needs, and challenges of attracting a qualified work force in florist crop production firms now and in the future.

The telephone interview should take about 20 minutes. We know this is a very busy time of the year for you, so if we call at an inconvenient time, we would be happy to schedule the call at a better time.

Let us assure you that all your responses will remain confidential and will never be associated with your name or business. Only statistical summaries will be used in reporting the survey results. Again, your participation is critical to the success of the study and will contribute to an accurate evaluation of recruitment and selection methods in florist crop production firms.

If you have any questions about this survey, please call me at (607) 255-1628. Thank you in advance for your assistance on this important project.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Maloney
Extension Associate

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Recruitment and Selection Practices of Florist Crop Producers Survey

March 1993
Italics indicate instructions for interviewer

Introductory Script

1. Hello, my name is _____, and I'm calling from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. May I speak with *respondent?*

   Yes   *(Go to next question)*

   No   When is a good time for me to call back? *(Record)* Thank you. I'll call back then.

   No, what is this about? Cornell University is conducting a survey to gather information on recruitment and selection practices in florist crop production firms. I would like to speak with *respondent* to ask his/her assistance in this survey.

2. *(Repeat introduction.)* I'm calling about a survey that Cornell University is conducting to gather information on employee recruitment and selection practices in florist crop production firms. Did you receive a letter in the mail explaining our survey?

   Yes   Good. Would you be able to help us by participating in this survey, or do you have some questions before we begin?

   (Affirmative response) Before we begin, I just want you to know that your participation is voluntary and you may stop the interview at any time. All your answers will be kept confidential. Okay? *(go to next page)*

   No   Well, perhaps it was lost in the mail. Cornell University is conducting this survey in the states of Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. This study will be very helpful for determining the recruitment and selection needs in the florist crop production industry, and it should only last about 15 minutes. Will you help us by participating in this survey?

   Yes   Great. Before we begin, I just want you to know that your participation is voluntary and you may stop the interview at any time. All your answers will be kept confidential. Okay? *(go to next page)*

No, I don't have time   If now isn't a good time, I can call back at some other time. When is a good time to call back? *(record date and time)*

No, I really do not want to participate   The interview will only take about 15 minutes. And if it's not a good time, I can call again at a more convenient time.

This is really a very important study because there is little information like it available. The results of this survey will be used to help businesses like yours. The higher response rate we get, the more valuable the results are.

If you need some time to think it over, I can call again at a time that is most convenient to you.

Screening Questions

Are you one of the people responsible for the recruiting and selection of new employees?

Yes   *(Skip to B)*

No   Can you give me that person's name?_____

Is it possible to talk to *(New Person)*?

Yes ----------> *(Repeat introduction, or if call back, specify time)*

No, manager unavailable during interview period. *(Terminate interview and record)*

B   Is potted plant or bedding plant production your **primary business**?

1.   Yes

If yes, are you also involved in *(Check all that apply)*:

2.   Wholesale marketing?

3.   Retail marketing?

4.   No *(terminate interview and record)*

Do you employ **at least three non-family members** in your business annually?

1.   Yes

2.   No *(terminate interview and record)*

Recruitment

This first section is about employee recruitment.

C **How difficult** is it for you to attract qualified job applicants? Would you say that it is

  1. Not difficult

  2. Somewhat difficult

  3. Very difficult

D Are **seasonal or year-round employees more difficult to recruit**, or would you say they are about equally difficult?

  1. Seasonal

  Why do you think seasonal are more difficult?_____

  2. Year-round

  Why do you think year-round are more difficult?_____

  3. About the same

I will list four factors that may limit your ability to hire well qualified workers. Then I want you to tell me which factor is the most limiting, which is the second most limiting, and so forth.

E _____ Recruitment (attracting job applicants)   1 = most limiting

F _____ Selection (choosing the best applicant)

G _____ Compensation (your ability to provide competitive wages & benefits)

H _____ Factors outside the business (such as the labor market, gov't. regulations, and qualifications of the work force)

Now I am going to ask you to consider how difficult it is to attract different classes of workers. I will define three different classes of workers.

The first class is **Working Managers**. Working Managers have management responsibilities including authority to make decisions and supervise employees.

The second class is **Independent Employees**. Independent Employees work under limited supervision, possess strong skills related to the job, and make some decisions.

The final class is **Laborer**. Laborers work under close supervision, make few if any decisions, and posses basic skills, rather than advanced skills.

Would you like me to repeat any of the definitions?

I   How difficult is it to attract **working managers?** Would you say it is

1.   Not difficult

2.   Somewhat difficult

3.   Very difficult

88.   *Not applicable (don't hire any)*

J   How difficult is it to attract **independent employees?** Would you say it is

1.   Not difficult

2.   Somewhat difficult

3.   Very difficult

88.   *Not applicable*

K   How difficult is it to attract **laborers?** Would you say it is

1.   Not difficult

2.   Somewhat difficult

3.   Very difficult

88.   *Not applicable*

Now I will read a list of employee recruitment methods. As I read each method, please tell me **if you use that method "frequently," "sometimes," or "never."**

		Frequ	Some	Never	Why not?
L	Referrals from employees	1	2	N ➔ _____
M	Word of mouth	1	2	N ➔ _____
N	Advertisements in local newspapers	1	2	N ➔ _____
O	Government employment services	1	2	N ➔ _____
P	High schools or colleges	1	2	N ➔ _____
Q	Private employment agency or	1	2	N ➔ _____

Do you use this method

I will now ask you **how effective** you think each of these recruitment methods is. It does not matter if you use them or not — we still need your opinion.
A rating of 5 indicates a most effective method and a rating of 1 indicates a very ineffective method.

How effective would you say...

R	Referrals from employees	1	2	3	4	5
S	Word of mouth	1	2	3	4	5
T	Advertisements in local newspapers	1	2	3	4	5
U	Government employment services	1	2	3	4	5
V	High schools or colleges	1	2	3	4	5
W	Private employment agency	1	2	3	4	5
	or search firms					

If respondent doesn't want to answer (doesn't use): Can you give us your best perception of how effective it might be?

Selection

The next group of questions will cover selecting employees after you have recruited them.
Now I would like to know how frequently you use the following methods for gathering
information about potential job candidates. Just as before, as I read each method, please tell me
if you use that method "frequently," "sometimes," or "never."

		Do you use this method			
		Frequ	Some	Never	Why not?
X	Application forms	1	2	N➞ _____
Y	Reference checks	1	2	N➞ _____
Z	Interviews	1	2	N➞ _____
A A	Skills tests	1	2	N➞ _____
A B	Trial periods	1	2	N➞ _____

I will now ask you **how effective** you think each of these selection methods are. It does not
matter if you use them or not — we still need your opinion.
Once again, a rating of 5 indicates a most effective method and a rating of 1 indicates a very
ineffective method.

A C	Application forms	1	2	3	4	5
A D	Reference checks	1	2	3	4	5
A E	Interviews	1	2	3	4	5
A F	Skills tests	1	2	3	4	5
A G	Trial periods	1	2	3	4	5

A H How frequently do you interview with **a written list of questions?** Do you do this

1. frequently

2. sometimes

3. seldom

4. never

A I How frequently do you take care to **ask each applicant the same questions?** Do you do this

1. frequently

2. sometimes

3. seldom

4. never

Compensation

The next group of questions deals with the compensation, like wages and benefits, that you offer to your employees.

A J Which of the following statements best describes to what extent you **base your wage rate on what other employers are paying?**

1. We generally do not base our wage rate on what other employers are paying. We pay what we can afford.

2. We have a general sense of what others are paying and sometimes use this as a base to decide our wage rates.

3. We find out specifically what others are paying and use this to decide on our wage rate.

A K How satisfied would you say your employees are with their jobs? Are they

1. Very satisfied

2. Somewhat satisfied

3. Unsatisfied

A L How satisfied do you think your employees are with the wage and benefit package you offer? Are they

1. Very satisfied

2. Somewhat satisfied

3. Not satisfied

A M With what **other types of businesses do you compete** for employees?

_____ *does it seem like they had thought*
about it before?   (1) y   (2) n

A N How would you **rate employees' perceptions of working conditions** in your industry? Would you say employees view working conditions as:

1. Very favorable

2. Somewhat favorable

3. Not very favorable

A O How satisfied are you with the **quality of your workers?**

1. Very satisfied

2. Somewhat satisfied

3. Not satisfied

A P How satisfied are you with **employee turnover** in your business?

1. Very satisfied

2. Somewhat satisfied

3. Not satisfied

Business Characteristics

A Q What is the approximate **size of your production facility** in acres or square feet?

_____
43,560 sq ft/acre

Number of Employees

Now I want to know how many employees you had last year. First I'll ask about employees who are non-family members, and then about employees who are family members.

A R   At the end of 1992, how many **full-time year-round** non-family employees did you have?

_____   FTEs_____

A S   At the end of 1992, how many **part-time year-round non-family** workers did you have, that is, who worked less than 40 hours per week?

_____   FTEs_____

\# hrs/wk_____

Now let's look at your seasonal employees. During what month of the year did you have the most seasonal workers?_____

A T   How many **full-time seasonal** non-family workers did you have then?

_____   FTEs_____

\# wks_____

A U   How many **part-time non-family seasonal** workers did you have in _____*(month)?*
That would be workers who worked seasonally, but less than 40 hours per week.

_____   FTEs_____

\# wks_____

\# hrs/wk_____

AV (for total FTEs)

Now I want to know how many workers you had last year who are **family members**, including yourself.

    Let's start with year-round full-time workers. How many were family members?

A W Year-round Full-time? _____   FTEs_____

Did you have family members who worked year-round but part-time, that is, less than 40 hours each week?

AX   Part-time? _____   FTEs_____

    # hrs/wk_____

How many family workers did you have who worked seasonally and full-time?

A Y **Seasonal**   Full-time _____   FTEs_____

\# wks_____

Did you have any family members who worked part-time seasonally?

A Z   Part-time _____   FTEs_____

\# wks_____

\# hrs/wk_____

B A   total family FTEs

Thank you very much for your cooperation. You've been a great help.

Z Z Would you like a copy of this study when it is finished?

1.   Yes

2.   No

Thank you. Good-bye.

Appendix B

Employers were asked if they used specific recruitment and selection methods. If they answered "no" they were asked, "why not?" The reasons given were as follows

Recruitment

 # of   *answer*
respondents

Employee Referrals

    1   never get any

    1   employees usually want their friends, which haven't worked in past

Word of Mouth

    1   never seemed to work

    1   not dependable

Ads

15	no need
7	you get too many people to respond (not qualified)
3	attracts wrong type of person
1	no response in the past - people who call ask about unemployment benefits
1	people looking for labor work will not look in newspaper
1	unsuccessful in past
1	never tried
1	too costly
1	attract unemployed, and we want those who are already employed
1	rural area, mean age is 50 (implicit: doesn't want those older people, and these will be the ones who respond to ads)

Government Employment Services

25	no need
5	never thought about it/didn't know about them
4	bad past experience
3	wouldn't want to get into that (dislikes the government aspect)
2	bad system, they demand things from you and are unrealistic (with deadlines, etc.) (too many restrictions)
2	get more qualified workers thru other methods
2	would have to take whoever they send from thru-out county, and wants someone local
1	they sent a person who was hired, but never showed up again
1	doesn't apply to labor workers
1	doesn't apply to part-time workers
1	never been approached by one

1	people they sent had substance abuse problems
1	they send people out who don't want to do job
1	too much money
1	the quality of the people who come through this are low (illiterate, eg)
1	people just want unemployment. people who want jobs are already employed
1	seasonal needs, gov't doesn't fit this. Also, people in gov't svc wait for job that is perfect for them and are not very aggressive about looking for work
1	don't know how to go about it

High Schools/Colleges

7	no need
1	demand for people from college placement services is high, response rate is low, and we look for more experienced people

Private Employment Agencies

26	no need
5	cost
2	don't know
2	didn't work out when tried
2	doesn't apply to our seasonal needs
1	when used once, they weren't able to come up with someone
1	doesn't apply to labor workers
1	only willing to justify cost for manager
1	assumes that the pay they (employer) offer is too low to use these
1	never been approached by one
1	best for temporary or seasonal employment

1	one respondent did not include Kelley Svcs, Manpower in this category, thinking that private employment agencies were different.
1	charge too much money, and worker isn't getting all the money you pay. Pay $10/hr, but only get a worker who's worth $5/hr, because that's all he's getting paid.
1	would use for manager as a last resort
1	they don't understand this type of business
1	never comfortable with them
1	don't want to be obliged to them
1	bad past experience
1	pay for worker not enough
1	never used/don't trust them

Selection

of   answer
respondents

Applications

1	don't have one
1	don't hire that many people
1	high number of returning people

Reference Checks

2	no need because they are referrals from employees
2	people are all local, we know them
1	don't hire that many people
1	I'm concerned about what the employee does for me, not what he has done for other people
1	the people called don't give any info

Interview

    1   not necessary for laborer job

    1   don't hire that many people

Skills Test

    12   not necessary for labor jobs (no skills nec)

    8   on-the-job (if it doesn't work out, they'll know)

    3   no need

    2   no access to them, also on-the-job training

    2   cover in interview

    2   we ask if they can do job, and they can learn the job if they want to

    2   not set up for them

    1   don't hire that many people

    1   unaquainted with these

    1   ask in interview

    1   use after they start working for placement or release

    1   trial period takes care of it

Trial Period

    1   don't hire that many people

    1   legal aspects of "probationary period;" don't want to get into it

    1   "no official policy"

    1   we just don't hire them next year if it doesn't work

    2   no need

    1   no need with short term of work

lengths of time of trial periods:
    two weeks
    2-3 weeks
    4-6 weeks
    6 months
    three months
    90-day

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