COMMUNICATION AND UNCERTAINTY REDUCTION DURING JOB TRANSFERS: LEAVING AND JOINING PROCESSES

MICHAEL W. KRAMER

Based on uncertainty reduction theory and a job transfer model, this longitudinal study explores the process by which communication facilitates the adjustment process for employees who transfer to new locations in the same organizations. Content analyses of interview data provided descriptions of the communication processes transferees use as they loosen relationships with coworkers at their old locations and develop relationships with coworkers at new locations. Statistical analyses examined the impact of types of communication relationships, feedback, and role development on the cognitive and affective adjustment of transferees. Results indicate that communication experiences have a significant impact on transferees, as well as other work group and organizational members, as they make sense and reduce uncertainty about their changing environments. Results support applying uncertainty reduction theory to exit phases of relationships and other transitions.

Communication enables organizational members to make sense of critical organizational events that possess high levels of uncertainty such as acquisitions, new management teams, new programs, or relocations (e.g., Isabella, 1990). Members also rely on communication to facilitate an understanding during the uncertainty of key events at the individual level of analysis such as changes in jobs or careers. For the approximately 300,000 employees who are geographically relocated to new positions within the same organizations each year (Brett & Werbel, 1980), the job transfer is such an event. The purpose of this study is to explore job transfers as key events in individuals’ careers. Specifically, it examines the communication processes by which job transfers are accomplished and the impact of communication on reducing employees' uncertainty as transferees leave one location and join another.

Previous research into job transfers has generally failed to consider the impact of communication on the transfer process and instead has primarily focused on such topics as identifying transferees' characteristics (e.g., fewer community ties, Turban, Campion, & Eyring, 1992), motives (e.g., career advancement in Brett, 1982), or responses (more job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Anderson, Milkovich, & Tsui, 1981). Limitations to this literature include that it is noncumulative and atheoretical (Anderson et al., 1981); it lacks the useful direction that theory provides (Pinder, 1978), and has typically relied on retrospective data collection techniques. Further, virtually all studies failed to explicitly study the process of how job transfers are accomplished and the impact of communication during job transfers. One exception to this is a study by Kramer (1989), which suggests that communication behaviors change as transferees and

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their coworkers go through phases of the job transfer process: a Loosening Phase during which transferees prepare to leave old locations; a Transition Phase during which transferees assume new positions; and a Tightening Phase at which time the work setting becomes routine. In order to address the limitations of the previous research, a theory-based model was developed to explore the job transfer process.

DEVELOPMENT OF A THEORETICAL MODEL

Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) provides a suitable framework for studying job transfers. This perspective suggests that individuals experiencing uncertainty (cognitive awareness) are motivated (affective response) to seek information (communication behaviors) to reduce uncertainty (Deci, 1975). Transferees are faced with a situation that is comparable to "global uncertainty" (Douglas, 1991) in which they must develop numerous new relationships and learn various new tasks as they begin new positions. The stress associated with this uncertainty (Jackson, Schuler, & Vredenburgh, 1987) should motivate transferees' to seek information to reduce uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).

Much of the uncertainty reduction research has concerned behaviors during brief initial or hypothetical interactions often outside any organizational or long-term context (e.g., Kellerman & Reynolds, 1990). Such a narrow focus fails to recognize the broader applications of the theory. The theory has implications for exploring communication as a means for resolving incompatibilities between cognitive structures, experiences, and behaviors in various settings (Deci, 1975) or interpersonal relationships during entry, personal, and exit phases (Berger & Calabrese, 1975); through communication individuals reduce uncertainty aroused when experiences do not match expectations or when relationships change. Applying the broader theoretical perspective to Kramer's (1989) model results in a model for developing research questions.

During the Loosening Phase, transferees must resolve incompatibilities between their commitment to transfer to new locations and their previous commitments to old jobs and coworkers. Similar to situations of organizational change or exit, uncertainty exists as they and their coworkers consider the ramifications of the transfer for both transferees and those left behind. Isabella (1990) found that prior to organizational changes, employees communicate rumors about possible changes and discuss conventional explanations for the events. Similarly, as employees prepare to exit under amiable conditions, their communication focuses on preparing fellow employees for their departure, expressing concern for the welfare of those remaining, passing on important job or organizational knowledge, and recruiting stayers to replace them in critical task communication networks (Jablin, 1987). Such communication seems designed to provide stability in an uncertain setting. In addition to these task-related concerns, there is recognition that the personal relationships involved will change. Given the impact of proximity on work relationships (Allen, 1970), relationships between transferees and coworkers go through what might be typified as "coming apart" (Knapp, 1984) or an exit phase (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Communication events such as farewell parties, so common in job transfer situations (Kramer, 1989), seem designed to acknowledge and address these changing relationships. Overall, the behaviors imply attempts by transfe-
ees and their coworkers to make sense of changing situations as they loosen their communication links. Thus, the Loosening Phase should be typified by transferees and coworkers becoming aware of the impact of the changes, motivating communication of information that will reduce uncertainty concerning tasks and relationships in the old locations.

During the Transition Phase, transferees are faced with a situation of high uncertainty. Within their lists of transitional activities, researchers such as Frese (1982) and Louis (1982) suggest transferees face four major tasks: (1) gaining sufficient task information to perform appropriately; (2) developing relationships necessary to function; (3) building and clarifying role expectations and relationships; and (4) developing appropriate scripts and schemas to understand the social system they have joined. Although as established members of their organizations they should not experience the same levels of uncertainty as newcomers, transferees behaviors should be similar to newcomers since they face the uncertainty of new jobs in new locations. Research on newcomers suggests that they seek information and feedback to reduce uncertainty while adapting to new or troublesome settings (Ashford, 1986). Newcomers use communication networks to gain access to resources and to develop a sense of belonging; information gained can reduce uncertainty through role identification and clarification (Albrecht & Adelman, 1984). At the same time, members of the established groups they are joining are likely to communicate important norms and behaviors through explicit statements, repetitions, or critical events (Feldman, 1984). In addition to the task-related information being exchanged, transferees and coworkers experience uncertainty concerning their work relationships. The relationships must "come together" (Knapp, 1984) through communication processes involving self-disclosure. Thus, during the Transition Phase, due to high uncertainty concerning tasks, roles, and relationships, communication should be typified by exchanges of information as transferees and coworkers are motivated to reduce uncertainty in their environments as they develop communication links.

During the Tightening Phase, uncertainty should be reduced as transferees and new coworkers tighten their communication links and establish routines as they become adjusted to each other. While some researchers have taken a chronological perspective on this adjustment process estimating it takes an average of 3–9 months (Kotter, 1979) or 6–12 months (Marshall & Cooper, 1976), others suggest that psychological changes are more significant indicators of adjustment. From this viewpoint, the transition period has passed when a rudimentary map has been generated, critical work relationships have developed, an understanding of one's role has evolved, and an understanding of the new environment has been acquired (Nicholson & West, 1988). When uncertainty has been significantly reduced, individuals move from being preoccupied with the transitions to focusing on maintaining new situations (Schlossberg, 1981).

Taking this psychological perspective on adjustment suggests cognitive, affective, and behavioral indicators of adjustment during the Tightening Phase. First, cognitive adjustment is suggested when transferees have developed schemata. Schemas or cognitive maps are learned by processing social information gained through communication (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). When environmental factors cue certain prototypes or schemata, they automatically stimulate
certain behavioral responses (Cantor, Mischel, & Schwartz, 1982). The development of schemas indicates that transferees have reduced uncertainty to the level that they no longer must consciously process each new situation, but can work with automatic responses and behaviors (Langer, 1978). Next, an understanding of one's role is an important task during transitions (Louis, 1982) and an important indication of psychological adjustment (Nicholson & West, 1988). Thus, when adjustment has occurred lower levels of role ambiguity are expected. Another indicator of reduced uncertainty should be reduced levels of stress. Stress during job transfers would be expected to be an acute stressor, a sudden temporary increase in stress, rather than a long-term stress brought on by the mismatch of a person to the situation (Doehrman, 1982). Information reduces stress associated with uncertainty (Jackson et al., 1987). Lower levels of stress would suggest affective adjustment for transferees. Increased job satisfaction should be another indicator of affective adjustment. Low levels of job satisfaction are likely indicators of transferees' failure to accomplish certain transitional tasks such as understanding role demands and becoming acclimated to the group (Feldman, 1981). Finally, as uncertainty is reduced for transferees, requests for information should be reduced (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).

Figure 1 incorporates URT and the preceding discussion into a model of job transfers. It suggests that communication performs a vital role throughout the transfer process. Through communication transferees exchange information with coworkers as they prepare to separate. Transferees reduce uncertainty by

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOOSENING PHASE</th>
<th>TRANSITION PHASE</th>
<th>TIGHTENING PHASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Loosening Links</strong></td>
<td><strong>Transition Links</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tightening Links</strong></td>
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<td>I. Cognitive Processes</td>
<td>I. Cognitive Response</td>
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<td>A. Awareness of impact</td>
<td>A. High uncertainty</td>
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<tr>
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<td>B. Scripts and schemas developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>for stayers</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. relationship changes</td>
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<td>1. to seek information</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Behavioral Changes</td>
<td>2. to develop relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Explanations of changes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Completing tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Discussion of impact on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. role clarification</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
exchanging information and resources to understand and manage their new environments. Through communication transferees solidify their roles in new locations.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

A wide range of research questions exploring the Loosening and Transition Phases are suggested by this model. This study focuses on communication during the Loosening and Transition Phases while future research will explore the Tightening Phase.

The model suggests that communication will be used to reduce uncertainty for stayers as relationships are loosened at the old locations. While these processes have been explored in other contexts (e.g., organizational exit in Wilson, 1983) and the importance of these processes is emphasized elsewhere (e.g., Nicholson & West, 1988), little is known about how communication is used to accomplish the loosening during job transfers. In light of this need for descriptive data, this research will explore the following question:

RQ1: How do transferees and their associates communicate in order to loosen relationships as they prepare to separate during the Loosening Phase?

The model suggests the importance of developing relationships and gaining information to reduce uncertainty in the new job settings during the Transition Phase. While the process of developing relationships has been explored in a variety of contexts, it has not been explored within the context of job transfers. Given that transferees are established members of the organization and yet newcomers to the particular location, the process may contain unique elements. Therefore, this research will gather descriptive data concerning the second question:

RQ2: How do transferees and their associates communicate to create new relationships during the Transition Phase?

The model suggests the importance of developing relationships as part of the adjustment process. Previous research suggests employees develop certain types of communication relationships with supervisors and coworkers. Kram and Isabella (1985) developed a communication-based typology of relationships: (1) informational peers almost exclusively discuss task information; (2) collegial peers also share more personal information and assist in job feedback and career strategy; and (3) special peers provide a strong base of emotional support with a potential for complete candor and mutual bonding. Previous research has shown that the development of closer communication relationships was associated with positive patterns of adjustment for newcomers (Jablin, 1984). This suggests that the development of closer (collegial and special) relationships with supervisors and peers has the potential for assisting transferees in their adjustment by providing them with additional information for understanding their roles, for developing schemas, and as an indication of success in developing important work group relationships. This suggests the following two hypotheses:

H1: Transferees who develop collegial and special relationships with their supervisors will experience more positive adjustment to their new locations than those who develop informational relationships.
H2: Transferees who develop higher percentages of collegial and special peers will experience more positive adjustment to their new locations while those with higher percentages of informational peers will experience less positive adjustment.

Previous research has indicated that feedback assists transferees in understanding their new environments (Louis, 1982). Feedback helps in exploring and understanding organizations while learning appropriate behaviors (Ashford, 1986). A wide range of types (task, appraisal, or relational; Miller & Jablok, 1991), methods (requests, observation, indirect, third party, and unsolicited; Miller & Jablok, 1991) and sources of feedback (peers and supervisors) have been identified making it difficult to determine what type of feedback would be most beneficial to transferees. While URT suggests that seeking feedback would reduce uncertainty, Nicholson and West (1988) state that transferees often fail to request information from new supervisors since they are a source of uncertainty. This suggests that unsolicited feedback should have an even more positive impact on transferees’ adjustment than solicited feedback. Thus, this research explored the following hypothesis:

H3: High levels of unsolicited feedback from their new work group will be a better predictor of positive adjustment for transferees than high levels of solicited feedback.

The previous hypotheses imply that transferees must receive the information necessary to reduce uncertainty in their new positions from other sources. While some employees passively receive roles (custodial roles), others actively create and clarify their roles by enacting changes (innovative roles) in their environments (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Jones (1983) hypothesized that employees with confidence and experience (such as transferees) take a more proactive role in developing their roles. Kramer (1989) found transferees typically receive individualized socialization, which was associated with more role innovation among newcomers (Jones, 1986). In light of such findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Transferees who actively develop their new roles will experience more positive adjustment than those who passively accept their roles.

Each of the variables suggested in the research hypotheses are expected to impact transferees’ adjustment. However, the individual analyses for each variable will not indicate the relative or cumulative impact of the variables. Thus a final question is explored:

RQ3: What is the relative and cumulative impact of relational communication, feedback, and role development, on transferees’ adjustment?

METHODOLOGY

To explore these questions concerning the Loosening and Transition Phases, a longitudinal research design was used. Data were collected from participants during two time periods as a part of a larger research project. T1 data concerning work experiences at the old location were collected prior to or just after job transfers. T2 data concerning work experiences at the new location were collected approximately one month after the job transfers.

Organizations with facilities in a southwestern state that were likely to experience job transfers were contacted by the researcher for assistance in identifying individuals in the process of transferring. Organizations providing participants
for the study included four government agencies (social services, law enforce-
ment, recreation, and construction; \( n = 49 \)), nine private firms (four high tech,
two utilities, and three financial institutions; \( n = 35 \)), and two military units
\( (n = 5) \).

Once organizations provided names of potential participants, individuals
were contacted, the nature of the research explained to them, and their
participation requested. Individualized mailings were conducted for each partic-
ipant according to their specific transfer dates. In each mailing, transferees
received a letter of explanation, the appropriate questionnaire, and a stamped,
return envelope. Of the 102 individuals who agreed to participate, 91 (89%)
returned the first questionnaire and 89 of those (98%) returned the second
questionnaire. Subjects were predominantly male (74%), young (mean = 33.89;
sd = 7.7), married (63%), and without children (54%). Most had received no
previous transfer offers (63%), initiated their own transfers (66%), perceived
themselves as in the middle of their organizational hierarchy (66%) and viewed
their transfers as lateral moves (62%).

Quantitative measures. Previous research provided several scales used to opera-
tionalize variables in the current research. All new scales were pretested and
analyzed for appropriate factor structures and reliabilities.¹

To operationalize types of relationships, a series of three descriptions of
communication relationships were developed based upon Kram and Isabella’s
(1985) typology. Respondents indicated which description best described their
supervisor relationships (nominal data) and the percentages of their peers that
best fit each description (ratios).²

For feedback, a series of statements concerning different feedback content
(task, appraisal, or relational; Miller & Jablin, 1991), obtained through different
methods (overt requests, observation, indirect, third party, and unsolicited;
Miller & Jablin, 1991) were developed for peers and supervisors. Respondents
indicated the frequency to which statements described their experiences on
Likert-type scales. Factor analysis results indicated three feedback factors indicat-
ive of two sources and two methods of feedback without regard to specific
contents: (1) solicited feedback from peers (eigenvalue = 4.02, variance = 40.2%,
\( \alpha = .86 \)); (2) unsolicited feedback from supervisors (eigenvalue = 1.94, vari-
ance = 19.4%, \( \alpha = .84 \)); and (3) unsolicited feedback from peers (eigenval-
ue = 1.33, variance = 13.3%, \( \alpha = .79 \)).

Role Development was measured with the role orientation scale (Jones, 1986).³
This scale measures the degree to which individuals take an active part in
developing their roles through their communication and behaviors rather than
passively accepting roles. Respondents reported the degree to which statements
described their behaviors on Likert-type scales.

In order to gain a broad picture of transferees’ adjustment the variety of
affective, cognitive, and behavioral measurements of adjustment suggested by
the model were used. Two measurements concerned transferees’ affective
response: stress measured the degree to which they felt physically unsettled as a
result of work (7 true or false items; House & Rizzo, 1972; \( \alpha = .73 \)); and job
satisfaction measured the degree to which they felt content with their work (3
Likert-type items; Hackman & Oldham, 1975; \( \alpha = .81 \)). Role ambiguity tapped
into affect and cognitions by measuring the degree to which they felt confident
about knowing their job roles (6 Likert-type items; Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970; \( \alpha = .84 \)). Finally, in order to measure knowledge of appropriate communication behaviors, two schema scales were developed: task schema knowledge (4 Likert-type items; \( \alpha = .78 \)) on which transferees indicated the degree to which they understood appropriate task related communication behaviors; and relationship and influence schema knowledge (4 Likert-type items; \( \alpha = .76 \)) on which they indicated the degree to which they knew how to communicate to develop relationships and influence decision making.

Qualitative data. A series of phone interviews were conducted exploring the processes of loosening relationships and developing new relationships (see Appendix A). Approximately 30\% (n = 27) of the participants completed interviews during their last week at their old jobs and 43\% (n = 38) completed separate interviews at T2. The remaining subjects participated in other interviews as part of the larger research project. The field notes from the interviews were then content analyzed (Krippendorff, 1980).^4^

**RESULTS**

A series of tests were conducted to determine whether methodological\(^5\) or potential moderating variables\(^6\) confounded the results. These analyses indicated these factors did not impact the results with respect to communication data.

**Manipulation Check of Uncertainty Levels**

To determine whether transferees experienced uncertainty as a result of their transfers, a manipulation check was conducted. A series of 1 × 2 repeated measures ANOVAs indicated that there were significant decreases in the reported levels of task schema knowledge, \( F(1,87) = 19.04, \eta^2 = .09, p < .005 \); and relationship and influence schema knowledge, \( F(1,87) = 12.31, \eta^2 = .12, p < .001 \); and significant increases in levels of role ambiguity, \( F(1,87) = 8.43, \eta^2 = .09, p < .005 \); from T1 to T2. These results suggest transferees were experiencing cognitive uncertainty. Results also indicated significant decreases in the level of stress, \( F(1,87) = 11.86, \eta^2 = .12, p < .001 \); and that levels of job satisfaction did not change significantly, \( F(1,87) = 2.19, \eta^2 = .02, p < .14, power = .31 \). These results suggest that transferees experienced increases in cognitive uncertainty, but that this did not have a strong affective impact.

**Questions and Hypotheses**

**RQ1: Loosening relationships.** Content analysis of phone interview data collected during the Loosening Phase (n = 27) indicated respondents emphasized the following: (1) changes in their work circumstances; (2) common conversational topics (Table 1); (3) affective responses to conversations; (4) special communication efforts made prior to their departures; (5) farewell events; and (6) general concerns about their transfers given in response to open-ended questions at the end of the interviews (Table 2).

Results suggest that for about half (41\%) of the transferees, the work remained fairly routine during the Loosening Phase; others experienced increases (15\%) or decreases (30\%) in their work. Most felt they were treated about the same by their coworkers (56\%), but some reported more positive (33\%) or less positive
TABLE 1
CONVERSATION TOPICS REPORTED BY TRANSFEREES IN GENERAL CONVERSATION DURING LOOSENING PHASE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Categories</th>
<th>General Conversation</th>
<th>Conversations with Close Friends</th>
<th>Conversations with Casual Acquaintances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency (n = 27)</td>
<td>Percentage of 27 Interviews</td>
<td>Frequency (n = 64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congratulations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regrets/Sadness</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.81</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Job/Location</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.52</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departure Details</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.81</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on Stayers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information for Stayers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Transfer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Interests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Concerns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joking about Job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Replacement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intercoder Reliability for data reported in Table 1: Simple Agreement = .97  Cohen's Kappa = .96

TABLE 2
RESPONSE RATES FOR OPEN ENDED RESPONSES OF TRANSFEREES TO THE EXPERIENCE OF TRANSFERRING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Categories</th>
<th>Loosening Phase</th>
<th>Transition Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency (n = 68)</td>
<td>Percentage of 27 Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Concerns</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Move Details</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Job Concerns</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Job Issues</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social or Relationship Issues</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Reactions</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intercoder Reliability for Table 2: Simple Agreement = 1.00  Cohen's Kappa = 1.00

(11%) treatment. As Table 1 reports, as relationships were loosened, transferees frequently received congratulatory remarks and expressions of regret over their leaving, but seemed to do most of the talking as they communicated information about new jobs, the leaving process, and potential changes at the old site due to their leaving. In addition, with close friends they also talked about reactions of their family members, the effects on outside interests, and passed on specific task-related information of value to stayers such as how to do some particular procedure. Other results indicated that in conversations with close friends they reported experiencing positive excitement about their opportunities (37%) as well as anxiety (22%), and unhappiness about leaving their friends (30%). They indicated limited affective responses to conversations with casual acquaintances (85%) and some reported irritation (22%) over spending time in such conversations. While some reported making no special attempts to communicate with anyone before leaving (19%), most attempted to have final conversations with one or more persons including supervisors (41%), organizational friends (44%), or important nonwork acquaintances (22%). These conversations typically in-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Categories</th>
<th>General Conversation</th>
<th>Positive Initial Conversations</th>
<th>Negative Initial Conversations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency (n = 109)</td>
<td>Percentage of 42 Interviews</td>
<td>Frequency (n = 101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Location</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61.90</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Careers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Procedures and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>69.05</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Environment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Interests</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Topics</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.81</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.05</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Topics</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Transfer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intercoder Reliability for data compiled in Table 3: Simple Agreement = .83  Cohen’s Kappa = .79

Volved either final reports or farewells and thanks for valued relationships. Nearly all experienced farewell events either at work (74%) and/or outside of work (74%) often involving gifts (37%). Results in Table 2 show that as they experienced loosening, they were concerned with family-related issues (excitement and anxiety), leaving their positions in good order, the mechanics of the physical move, and the impact of the move on their social relationships and themselves.

RQ2: Creating relationships. Content analysis of phone interview data collected concerning relationship development (n = 42) indicated four general areas: (1) how they met people; (2) topics of discussion as they met people (Table 3); (3) types of behaviors that caused transferees to form positive or negative impressions; and (4) general concerns about their transfers in response to open-ended questions at the end of the interviews (See Table 2 above).

Results indicate that transferees most frequently met others as a part of normal work routines (52%), but also by other methods such as coworkers (40%) or supervisors (24%) taking them around and introducing them to others. Transferees were more likely to report that introductions were initiated by others (47%) than by themselves (10%), although many reported introductions were initiated about “half and half” (43%) by themselves and others. As reported in Table 3, some of the topics discussed during these initial interactions are typical of any initial interactions (Knapp, 1984) such as outside interests and family topics; however, due to established organizational membership, transferees also engaged in other topics such as work relationships and procedures to assist in task accomplishment and discussions of positive and negative aspects of past and current work environments. Results suggest a balanced interaction with transferees and new coworkers contributing about equally to the conversation as they exchanged information about such topics as their backgrounds, the work environment, and the community. Transferees formed positive impressions of others perceived as accepting (48%), helpful (31%), skilled (19%),
and/or similar to them (24%) and negative ones when people expressed pessimistic attitudes (33%), unprofessional behaviors (25%), and/or a variety of character flaws such as being abrupt (19%) or egotistical (14%). More personal topics were reserved for conversations with people who made positive impressions. At T2 compared to T1, transferees were less likely to express concern over family matters, no longer expressed concerns about their old jobs, but were more concerned about their new jobs and social relationships.

**H1: supervisor relationship.** For supervisor relationships, transferees reported virtually the same number of special (T1 = 13; T2 = 14), collegial (T1 = 27; T2 = 27), and informational supervisors (T1 = 48; T2 = 49) for both data collection periods. A chi-square test of independence for the 2 × 3 contingency table confirmed there were no significant trends in the data, \( \chi^2(2) = .05, p < .97, \) power < .12.

To determine the impact of supervisor relationships, a series of repeated measures MANOVAs (or ANOVAs) were computed for the types of supervisor relationships and changes in types of supervisor relationships.\(^7\) Results indicated that there were no significant main, \( F(10,160) = .42, R^2 = .05, p < .94, \) power = .21; or interaction effects, \( F(10,160) = 1.44, R^2 = .16, p < .17, \) power = .71; for type of supervisor relationship at T1. The type of supervisor relationship at T2 did have a significant effect on role ambiguity at T2, \( F(2,86) = 5.91, R^2 = .12, p < .003; \) and relationship and influence schema at T2, \( F(2,86) = 4.76, R^2 = .10, p < .01. \) A Scheffé analysis indicated that compared to those who reported collegial relationships, transferees who reported an informational supervisory relationship at T2 experienced more role ambiguity (Informational–M = 15.77; sd = 4.34; Collegial–M = 12.59; sd = 3.42) and had less relationship and influence schema knowledge (Informational–M = 14.44; sd = 2.02; Collegial–M = 15.89; sd = 1.95). The pattern of change in type of supervisor from T1 to T2 (nine possible patterns all of which occurred) also had a significant impact on role ambiguity at T2, \( F(8,80) = 2.17; R^2 = .18; p < .04. \) However, the conservative Scheffé analysis failed to identify the source of difference. Overall, hypothesis one is partially supported. Transferees with informational relationships with their supervisors experienced less positive adjustment than those with closer relationships; specifically they experienced more role ambiguity and less relationship and influence schema knowledge.

**H2: Peer relationships.** For peer relationships the trends from T1 to T2 were as expected with increases in percentages of informational peers (T1: M = 41.6, sd = 24.6; T2: M = 50.1, sd = 33.2) and decreases in percentages of collegial (T1: M = 31.6, sd = 22.4; T2: M = 28.0, sd = 25.1) and special peers (T1: M = 26.8, sd = 24.6; T2: M = 21.9, sd = 24.8). A series of 1 × 2 ANOVAs indicated that increases in informational peers were significant, \( F(1,87) = 4.73, \) eta\(^2\) = .05, \( p < .03; \) but that decreases were not significant in special peers, \( F(1,87) = 2.88, \) eta\(^2\) = .03, \( p < .09; \) or collegial peers, \( F(1,87) = 1.25, \) eta\(^2\) = .01, \( p < .26; \) power < .20.

A series of 15 stepwise regression analyses analyzed the impact of percentages of peer relationships on adjustment at T2. In these, the percentages of the three different types of peers at T1 and T2 were entered as predictor variables with the five adjustment measurements entered as dependent variables. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4. To summarize, percentages of
different types of peers at T1 were not significant predictors of adjustment at T2. However, higher percentages of informational peers at T2 were negative predictors of all five measurements of adjustment at T2. Higher percentages of collegial peers at T2 were positive predictors of four measurements of adjustment at T2. Finally, higher percentages of special peers at T2 were predictive of more job satisfaction and less role ambiguity at T2. Overall, hypothesis two is supported; high percentages of informational peers were strong negative predictors of adjustment for transferees and the development of closer peer relationships resulted in more positive adjustment.

**H3: Feedback.** First analyses were completed to determine trends in the types of feedback transferees reported receiving. Repeated measures MANOVA results indicated significant differences in types of feedback across time, $F(3, 85) = 5.77$, $R^2 = .17$, $p < .001$. Since results of the multivariate analysis were significant, two additional analyses were computed. Results of repeated measures ANOVAs indicated there were significant increases (T1: $M = 1.94$; $sd = .7$; T2: $M = 2.14$; $sd = .9$) in the reported amounts of solicited feedback from peers from T1 to T2, $F(1, 88) = 6.78$, $\eta^2 = .07$, $p < .01$. Also, there were significant decreases (T1: $M = 3.65$; $sd = .7$; T2: $M = 3.45$; $sd = .7$) in the reported levels of unsolicited feedback from peers from T1 to T2, $F(1, 88) = 5.49$, $\eta^2 = .06$, $p < .02$. However, the slight decreases (T1: $M = 2.86$; $sd = .8$; T2: $M = 2.59$; $sd = .9$) in the levels of unsolicited feedback from supervisors only approached significance, $F(1, 87) = 3.33$, $\eta^2 = .04$; $p < .07$.

These ANOVA results also indicated there were significant differences in amounts of different types of feedback for both time T1, $F(2, 87) = 167.72$, $\eta^2 = .79$, $p < .001$; and T2, $F(2, 86) = 99.89$, $\eta^2 = .70$, $p < .001$. A series of contrasts indicated that for both time periods transferees reported receiving significantly more unsolicited than solicited feedback at T1, $F(1, 88) = 195.60$, $p < .001$; and T2, $F(1, 87) = 94.02$, $p < .001$; more unsolicited feedback from peers than from supervisors at T1, $F(1, 88) = 60.19$, $p < .001$; and T2: $F(1, 87) = 89.74$, $p < .001$; and more unsolicited than solicited feedback at T1, $F(1, 88) = 331.17$, $p < .001$; and T2, $F(1, 87) = 179.07$, $p < .001$. 

### Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables at T2</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$p &lt;$</th>
<th>Outcome Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational Peers</td>
<td>.29;</td>
<td>4.16; 1.86</td>
<td>.09;</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>More Stress at T2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.36;</td>
<td>13.47; 1.86</td>
<td>.13;</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>Less Job Satisfaction at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.42;</td>
<td>19.24; 1.86</td>
<td>.18;</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>More Role Ambiguity at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.29;</td>
<td>8.02;  1.86</td>
<td>.09;</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>Less Task Schema at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.37;</td>
<td>14.40; 1.86</td>
<td>.14;</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>Less Relationship/Inf Schema at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial Peers at T2</td>
<td>-.26;</td>
<td>4.61; 1.86</td>
<td>.05;</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>Less Stress at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.26;</td>
<td>6.38; 1.86</td>
<td>.07;</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>Less Role Ambiguity at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.28;</td>
<td>7.09; 1.86</td>
<td>.08;</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>More Task Schema at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.32;</td>
<td>9.56; 1.86</td>
<td>.09;</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>More Relationship/Inf Schema at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Peers at T2</td>
<td>.31;</td>
<td>9.21; 1.86</td>
<td>.10;</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>More Job Satisfaction at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.31;</td>
<td>9.15; 1.86</td>
<td>.10;</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>Less Role Ambiguity at T2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 5
RESULTS OF STEPWISE REGRESSION ANALYSES FOR THE IMPACT OF TYPES OF FEEDBACK ON TRANSFERRERS’ ADJUSTMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Change R²</th>
<th>Change p &lt;</th>
<th>Adjustment Variable</th>
<th>(Total R²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Solicited Peers at T1</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.28</td>
<td>7.42;</td>
<td>1.86;</td>
<td>.08;</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>Less Stress at T2 (.08)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsolicited Supervisor at T2</td>
<td></td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>9.32;</td>
<td>1.86;</td>
<td>.10;</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>More Job Satisfaction at T2 (.14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicited Peers at T1</td>
<td></td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>6.78;</td>
<td>2.85;</td>
<td>.04;</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>Less Role Ambiguity at T2 (.24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsolicited Supervisor at T2</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.49</td>
<td>26.65;</td>
<td>1.86;</td>
<td>.24;</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>More Task Schema Knowledge at T2 (.09)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsolicited Supervisor at T2</td>
<td></td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>8.43;</td>
<td>1.86;</td>
<td>.09;</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>More Relationship and Influence Knowledge at T2 (.11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsolicited Supervisor at T2</td>
<td></td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>10.91;</td>
<td>1.86;</td>
<td>.11;</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to determine the relative impact of these three types of feedback on adjustment of transferees, a series of five stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed. In these, the three types of feedback at T1 and T2 were entered as predictor variables and T2 adjustment measures as dependent variables. The results of these analyses are reported in Table 5. To summarize, high levels of solicited feedback from peers at T1, but not at T2, were predictive of low stress at T2. More unsolicited feedback from supervisors at T2 and more solicited feedback from peers at T1 were significant predictors of high job satisfaction at T2. High levels of unsolicited feedback from supervisors at T2 were predictive of low role ambiguity, and high task schema and relationship and influence schema knowledge at T2. Thus, hypothesis three is supported and clarified; transferees who receive unsolicited feedback from their supervisors at T2 (as compared to their peers) experienced more positive adjustment. However, the results also indicate transferees who solicit more feedback from their peers prior to their transfers also experience some positive outcomes, less stress and more job satisfaction.

H4: Role development. Results for the role development instrument indicated slight decreases in role development (innovation) from T1 ($M = 17.44; sd = 4.9$) to T2 ($M = 16.44; sd = 5.4$). Repeated measures ANOVA results indicated that the reported decrease in role development was not significant, $F(1,88) = 2.98$, eta$^2 = .03$, $p < .09$.

To determine the impact of role development on transferees’ adjustment a series of partial correlations were computed. To summarize the results of these analyses, the role response adopted by transferees at T2 had a statistically significant relationship only to the measurement of relationship and influence schema at T2 ($r = .33; p < .001$). Those who were innovative at T2 (controlling for T1) had more relationship and influence schema knowledge at T2. In addition, a separate post-hoc series of analyses concerning the impact of role development at T1 suggested those who reported being more innovative at T1 experienced slightly more role ambiguity ($r = .24; p < .01$) and stress ($r = .22; p < .02$), along with slightly lower levels of job satisfaction ($r = -.16; p < .06$) and task schema knowledge ($r = -.25; p < .06$) at T2. Overall, these results provide, at best, minimal support for hypothesis four. Instead, results suggest
that transferees who were more active in developing their previous positions experienced negative adjustment in their new positions.

**RQ3: Relative impact.** In order to determine the relative impact of the various communication variables, a series of stepwise regression analyses were conducted. The results of these analyses are summarized in Table 6.

To summarize the results, higher percentages of informational peers at T2, lower levels of solicited feedback from peers at T1, and more active role development at T1 were predictive of higher levels of stress at T2. Higher percentages of informational peers at T2, a collegial relationship with the supervisor at T1, and lower levels of solicited feedback from peers at T1 were predictive of low job satisfaction. Lower levels of unsolicited feedback from supervisors and higher percentages of informational peers at T2, along with more active role development at T1 were predictive of higher levels of role ambiguity. Lower levels of unsolicited feedback from supervisors at T2 and more active role development at T1 were predictive of lower task schema knowledge at T2. And higher percentages of informational peers and less active role development at T2 were predictive of lower levels of relationship and task schema knowledge at T2.

**DISCUSSION**

Recent criticism of uncertainty reduction theory has focused on its failure to accurately explain certain behaviors during initial interactions (Sunnafrank, 1990). For example, Kellerman and Reynolds (1990) found that information
seeking and liking are positively associated under conditions of uncertainty during initial interactions, rather than negatively related as originally postulated (Berger & Calabrese's, 1975, theorem 17). Results here support Kellerman and Reynolds' conclusion; transferees discussed more topics and more personal topics with those they perceived positively during initial interactions. Further, results suggest that during exit phases in relationships the same association is evident: transferees discussed more topics and more personal ones with their close coworkers as they reduced uncertainty about the impact of the changes and passed on task information. Further, exploration of URT should pursue such exit phase relationships, not just initial interactions.

Unlike Kellerman and Reynolds (1990) who found no support for the general notion that as uncertainty increases information requests also increase (Berger & Calabrese's, 1975, Axiom 3), results here are supportive of the idea. Transferees reported significant increases in their requests for feedback from peers as they faced the high levels of uncertainty in their new positions (RH3). The difference in results may be due to the need to establish long-term relationships and the global nature of uncertainty facing transferees about tasks, roles, and relationships. Under these circumstances transferees significantly increased their requests for information and feedback from peers. It may also be that they did not request the information from the source of uncertainty, for example, the supervisor (Nicholson & West, 1988); instead they requested information from peers to reduce uncertainty about supervisors, tasks, or other peers. In dismissing the relationship between uncertainty and information requests, Kellerman and Reynolds look only at information requests to the source of uncertainty, the only possible source of information in their hypothetical interactions. In naturally occurring initial interactions, additional sources of information exist which can be questioned to reduce uncertainty.

In addition, results suggest the value of URT in studying transitions and not just initial interactions. This research focused on the broader implications of URT for exploring communication behaviors in various settings (Deci, 1975) such as relationships in entry, personal, and exit phases (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). In this study, even though the data were collected at the personal level of analyses (transferees), an analysis of the combination of qualitative and quantitative data suggests the importance of communication in reducing uncertainty as a part of the sense-making process during job transfers at three levels of analysis, the personal (transferees), group (coworkers at both locations) and organizational levels during phases of ending and initiating relationships.

There are a variety of ways in which communication assists transferees in reducing uncertainty as they adjust to their new position. Communication prior to transferring assists transferees in making sense of their new environments, even though pre-transfer conditions generally have limited impact on post-transfer adjustment. Transferees who solicited more feedback from their peers in their old positions reported experiencing less stress and more job satisfaction in their new positions (H3). Apparently transferees who gain more information through communication with peers while in their old jobs were able to better prepare for their new positions.

Communication with both supervisors and peers reduced uncertainty about new positions resulting in a significant positive impact on transferees' adjustment. On the one hand, transferees who felt they received more unsolicited
feedback from their supervisors (H3 & RQ3) and had collegial relationships (H1) with supervisors at T2 (more depth of communication) reported more positive adjustment. On the other hand, having more personal communication relationships with peers and having lower percentages of informational peers (those providing only task information) were predictive of positive adjustment (H2 & RQ3). Together, results suggest the importance of communication in transferees' adjustment without suggesting any distinct differences between communication with supervisors and peers; differences may appear over time.

Interview results provide insight into the process by which communication assists transferees in reducing uncertainty as they make sense of their new environments. With coworkers at the new location typical initial conversation topics of background, interests, and family, are supplemented with conversations concerning work procedures and the work environment. During these conversations transferees clarified task procedures and work relationships. They reduced uncertainty by determining appropriate and necessary work relationships, differentiating responsibilities, and gaining a sense of the general work culture and environment.

In addition to assisting transferees in making sense of their new work environments, communication during the process reduces uncertainty for coworkers at both locations affected by transfers. Transferees seemed to recognize the importance of this communication to coworkers at their old locations. Many tried to pass on important job information while completing tasks before their departures to enable coworkers to continue with minimal uncertainty and disruption. In addition to farewells, transferees frequently provide explanations for their leaving so that stayers understood their motives. One transferee reported alleviating anxiety for stayers who feared he was abandoning a sinking ship by explaining the move was for career advancement. Given that transferees were reducing uncertainty for their coworkers, it is not surprising that the loosening conversations seemed to be lopsided with transferees communicating the majority of the information.

Discussions between transferees and new coworkers similarly helped those affected make sense of their changing environment. Transferees provide information about previous work locations and experiences assisting coworkers in developing understanding and expectations for their new peers. Communication helped to clarify job responsibilities, procedures, and relational parameters between transferees and coworkers. Exchanges about the community, families, and outside interests assisted in developing relationships. Given that uncertainty was being reduced for both coworkers and transferees, it is not surprising to find the more balanced conversational "give and take" typical of relationship development (Altman & Taylor, 1973).

Communication also assisted in sense-making for the organization at large. Ceremonial rituals express organizational values for members adjusting to changes (Deal, 1985). Symbolic acts associated with job transfers, such as a "Wall of Fame" (pictures of personnel who have transferred) or farewell events, seemed designed to assist the larger organization in marking and understanding changes. While the symbolic events at the new location were typically less formal and more low-keyed, first day tours and introductions also helped organizational members understand change. Both the farewell and welcoming events seem to represent triggering events marking significant changes (Bill-
ings, Milburn, & Schaalman, 1980). As such they are communication events that assist organizational members in making sense by reducing uncertainty in their changing environment.

These findings, although based on self-report data from a brief (but very significant) segment of time, suggest the importance of communication during job transfers for transferees, coworkers at both locations, and the organization at large. Previous job transfer research (e.g., Pinder, 1977) has looked at difficult to influence predictors of satisfaction with recent transfers, such as preference for the new city. However, this research, explaining similar amounts of variance while using more stringent statistical procedures, provides organizations with impetus for improving job transfers. Through training and increased sensitivity concerning the impact of communication on transferees’ affective and cognitive adjustment during these key events in their organizational careers, organizations may be able to facilitate more positive experiences for transferees.

By using URT to study communication during the process, this study has extended the understanding of job transfers in a number of ways. Results suggest that transferees initially experience positive affective reaction to transfers in reduced stress, but suffer negative cognitive responses in increased role ambiguity and decreased schema knowledge. Other results provide descriptions of some typical communication during the process. Loosening conversations involve congratulations and regrets, as well as sharing of potential impacts on those remaining. Introductory conversations involve sharing background and family topics, as well as information about procedures and organizational climate. Communication with both supervisors and peers assists in reducing uncertainty for transferees. Finally, in focusing on transferees, previous research has failed to consider the impact of transferees on those surrounding them. Results here suggest that coworkers at both ends of transfers are also involved in reducing uncertainty as they adjust to changes.

The number of job transfers is likely to continue at a high level as organizations continue to move personnel in order to have “an employee with the necessary skills and experience to fill a strategic position” (Magnus & Dodd, 1981, p. 539). Future studies, over more extended time periods, including data from supervisors, coworkers, and even spouses or family members may provide a broader picture of the adjustment process during job transfers. Such research may provide insight into ways to improve the transfer experience, as well as provide insight into the impact of communication on the adjustment of individuals in other work and life transitions.

NOTES

1 All new scales were pretested on a group of currently employed adults. Scales were factor analyzed (principal components, varimax rotation) with only items loading at greater than .60 on one factor and less than .40 on any additional factor accepted. Those items were then included in the questionnaire. After data collection for this study, items were again factor analyzed using the same standards resulting in the study’s variables. Scores were combined for items loading on the same factor. Complete scale development and factor loading results are available from the author upon request.

2 A test-retest procedure over one month with adult employees (n = 37) currently employed was conducted to pre-test relationship items reliabilities. For supervisor relationship simple agreement over time was .81; Cohen’s Kappa was .70 (Fleiss, 1971). Correlations over time for percentages of informational, collegial, and special peers were r = .85; r = .73; and r = .71.

3 Jones (1986) did not report results of a factor analysis pertaining to this scale. A factor analysis of the data from his five item scale revealed that one item did not correlate significantly with the other items and
did not load with the other items into a single factor. As a result of this, the remaining four items were used as the role response instrument for this study. The four item scale had a reliability of \( \alpha = .80 \).

4Field notes taken during the interview consisted of words and phrases spoken by respondents rather than complete sentences. These were divided into thematic units suggestive of unique ideas when notes indicated multiple responses to questions; this frequently resulted in interviewees' responses being divided into multiple units. Thematic units were chosen over other possibilities since the focus of the research questions was on providing descriptions of communication experiences. A random sample (20%) of the units was coded by a second judge for intercoder reliabilities. Simple agreement on identification of the same thematic units was .97; Cohen's Kappa was .95 (Fleiss, 1971). Units that suggested similar responses were grouped together and category labels that described the communication behaviors and strategies suggested by the data were developed by the researcher. All units were then coded into these categories. To determine reliabilities for the resulting analyses, a second judge coded approximately 20% of the sample. Intercoder reliabilities of simple agreement and Cohen's Kappa ranged from .79–1.00 and are reported on the appropriate tables. More complete category definitions, a code book, and examples are available from the author.

5Respondents completed the first questionnaire either shortly before leaving their old positions or shortly after they had arrived at their new positions. A manipulation check was performed to determine whether this variance in data collection was significant. Participants were divided into those completing T1 questionnaires prior to their transfers and those completing it after their transfers. A series of t-tests indicated that there were no significant difference between the two groups except in regards to the amount of Solicited Feedback from Peers at T1 (\( t = -2.38; df = 1.77; r^2 = .07; p < .02 \)) in which those who completed the questionnaire after reporting to their new location reported more solicited feedback from their peers in their old positions. However, since the two groups were not significantly different on this variable at T2, the variance accounted for was only 7%, and given the 32 t-tests run in this analysis would randomly produce 1–2 significant results at the \( p < .05 \) level, this was not considered a serious threat to the study's validity.

6Data concerning thirty potential moderating variables were collected as part of the questionnaires for each time period. These included individual characteristics (e.g., age, family attributes, and tenure), transfer characteristics (e.g., status change, size of cities, and who initiated the transfer), and organizational characteristics (e.g., type, size, and economic support). A series of t-tests, correlations, and ANOVAs were computed to determine the relative impact of these potential moderating variables. Results indicated only a few significant effects. Given the large number of tests computed, moderator were considered significant only if the results were significant at \( p < .05 \) and accounted for more than 6% of the variance for the appropriate data collection periods. A complete copy of the questionnaire items and a summary of these analyses are available from the author.

7The following MANOVAs and ANOVAs were computed with supervisor entered as the independent variable: (1) type of supervisor relationship at T1 across adjustment measurements at T1 and T2; (2) type of supervisor relationship at T2 across adjustment measurements at T2; and (3) change in supervisor relationship from T1 to T2 across adjustment measurements at T2.

8Partial correlations were computed between role response at T2 (controlling for role response at T1) and the adjustment measurements at T2. As a post-hoc analysis, correlations between role response at T1 and measurements of adjustment at T2 were computed.

9In the series of stepwise regression analyses, all communication variables from T1 and T2 were entered as predictor variables and adjustment measurements at T2 entered as dependent variables. Type of supervisor relationships were dummy coded (e.g., informational supervisor, not informational supervisor) in order to include supervisor relationships (nominal data) in these analyses.

10As a post-hoc test to allow for comparison to Pinder's results, multiple regression equations were computed to predict job satisfaction using the less stringent alpha level tests utilized in Pinder's research (alpha to enter \( p < .10 \)). Results indicated that communication variables explained 28% of the variance in job satisfaction at T2 using the less stringent test. Then, since Pinder found that preference for the new location explained the most variance in his results, a second set of analyses were computed with the rating of the new city at T2 entered as a potential variable into the stepwise regression analyses. Rating of the city was only the third variable to enter the equation as a predictor of job satisfaction and added only 4% to the total \( R^2 \).

REFERENCES


APPENDIX A PART I: DESCRIPTIVE OF LOOSENING RELATIONSHIPS (T1)

How many days until you will no longer be working at this location? ___

1. Now that you know you are leaving, how do you feel that your coworkers are treating you compared to before?
   
   Can you describe some examples that show that?
   
   Potential follow up questions: what were the topic(s) why were you aware of the change when and where did this occur how did you feel during or after this

2. About what percent of your coworkers would you describe as close friends? Describe a conversation that you have had with one such friend that dealt with the subject of your leaving.
   
   Potential follow up questions: when and where did this occur what other topics were discussed were feelings about each other discussed how did you feel during or after this to what extent was this typical

3. About what percent of your coworkers would you describe as just casual acquaintances? Have any of these casual acquaintances commented on your leaving? Please describe some examples of those times.
   
   Potential follow up questions: when and where did this occur what was discussed was an assessment of your leaving given were feelings about each other discussed how did you feel during or after this

4. Have you made any special efforts to talk to someone at work about your leaving? If so who?
   
   Potential follow up questions: when and where did you talk what was discussed what reaction did the other person have how did you feel afterwards

5. Have there been any other significant events that you have noticed that indicate you are leaving? If so, please describe it (them).

6. Is there anything else about the experience of leaving that you would like to mention that you feel is important that I haven't asked about?
APPENDIX A PART II: DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS (T2)

1. About how many people have you met at the new location already?

2. Name some of the common ways you meet new people at your new work location?

3. Who initiates most of these first meetings with others?

4. What topics do you typically talk about during those initial meetings?

5. Out of the many people that you’ve met, what percentage would you say fit into these three categories:
   - hit it off real well, positive impression
   - average, normal reaction
   - negative first impression

A. Think of one of the people you “hit it off real well” with. Think of an early conversation you had with that person, perhaps when you first met them.

1. Describe the conversation.

   Potential follow up questions: when and where did it occur
   - what was discussed
   - why did you feel so positive
   - how did you end the conversation
   - what was your goal in the conversation
   - did you accomplish your goal

2. Have you done anything to continue to get to know this person? What kinds of things.

3. Have your positive first impressions held true?

B. Think of one of the people you had a negative first impression of.

1. Describe an opening conversation with that person, perhaps the first time you met them.

   Potential follow up questions: when and where did it occur
   - what gave you the negative impression
   - what was discussed
   - who initiated the conversation
   - what was your goal in the conversation
   - did you accomplish your goal

2. Have you done anything to continue the relationship with this person. What kinds of things? What do you talk about during those encounters?

3. Have your negative first impressions held true so far?