AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS OF SECRETARIES IN HONOLULU, HAWAII

by

Naomi Woienski

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Naomi Woienski

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June 28, 1994
Date

Norman L. Millikan
Chairperson, Graduate Committee

Approved for the Major Department

June 28, 1994
Date

Norman L. Millikan
Head, Major Department

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Introduction	1
Rationale for the Study	2
Problem Statement	4
Limitations of the Study	6
Summary	6
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	8
Overview	8
The Secretarial Position	9
The Position of Management	13
Educational Outlook	18
Summary	23
3. PROCEDURES	25
Review of Related Literature	25
Development of the Survey Instrument and Transmittal Letter	26
Selection of Participants for the Study	26
Administration of the Survey Instrument	27
Analysis of Data and Presentation of Findings	28
Drawing Conclusions and Making Recommendations	28
4. FINDINGS	30
Introduction	30
Summary of Respondents	30
Education of Respondents	35
Importance of Continuing Education to Secretaries	39

Page

Importance of Continuing Education to Employers as Seen by their Secretaries 41
Personal Importance of Continuing Education 45
Characteristics of Respondents 47
Summary 51

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 53

Conclusions 53
Recommendations 57

APPENDICES 61

Appendix A -- Transmittal Letter 61
Appendix B -- Survey Instruments 62

BIBLIOGRAPHY 64

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		Page
1.	Summary of Respondents	30
2.	Types of Businesses Employing the 43 Respondents	32
3.	Size of Businesses Employing the 43 Respondents	34
4.	Education Level of 43 Respondents	35
5.	Continuing Education Needs of the 43 Respondents	36
6.	Setting Preferred for Continuing Education Pursuits	38
7.	Does Continuing Education Earn Secretaries a Higher Wage? (Views of Secretaries Responding)	39
8.	Has Level of Education Impacted Promotion?	40
9.	Are Employers Willing to Pay More for Education? (Views of Secretaries)	41
10.	Are Employers Willing to Pay for Continuing Education?	42
11.	In What Ways are Employers Willing to Help Employees pursue their Continuing Education?	43
12.	Factors Influencing Secretaries Pursuing Continuing Education?	45
13.	Gender of the 43 Respondents	47
14.	Age of the 43 Respondents	48
15.	Hourly Wage of the 43 Respondents	48
16.	Job Titles of 43 Respondents	49
17.	Secretarial Experience of 43 Respondents	51

ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this study was to assess the continuing education needs of secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii.

To collect data for the study, questionnaires were sent to 150 head secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, offices. The simple random sample was selected from the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce 1992 Directory of Member firms. Forty-three usable returns were received.

Thirty-two percent of the respondents reported that they were employed by businesses which employed over 100 full-time employees, and thirty percent were employed by businesses employing less than 10 full-time employees. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents were female, 37% of the respondents were between the ages of 25-35. Salaries of over $10.00 per hour were reported by 81% of the respondents. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents continued their education beyond high school.

The findings of the study showed that more than half of the respondents, sixty-five percent, believe they have a continuing education need in computer software. Only 4.6% of the respondents did not indicate any area of continuing education needs. The other two common areas of continuing education needs were management and human resources.

Over 75% of the respondents report that they would prefer taking continuing education courses at a community college or state university setting.

The data from the study indicated that most secretaries in Honolulu do not believe continuing education courses earn secretaries a higher wage. More than half of the respondents also do not believe that their level of education has impacted any promotion opportunities. The data also showed that only 25% of the secretaries believe that their employer would be willing to pay more for a secretary who pursues continuing education courses.

Almost half of the respondents believe that their employers are willing to pay for their continuing education courses. Of the secretaries who believe their employers would help pay for

their education, 37% felt that their employers would reimburse them for the full tuition costs.

The data revealed that the most influential factor for secretaries in Honolulu to pursue continuing education courses is the belief/knowledge that furthering their education would actually enhance their career path.

Based on the findings of the study, the writer recommends that educators prepare secretarial students for the varied perceptions of the profession, that secretarial students be challenged to develop a career path, that college business educators develop a close working relationship with the business community, that the college or university offer career path counseling seminars for secretaries, that a seminar also be facilitated by the college of business faculty for local employers relating to their secretaries, and that the university offer a seminar on employer/employee communication.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

While most people would agree that a secretarial position is invaluable to businesses, many hold on to "old-fashioned" stereotypes of secretaries. The high regard for a skilled secretary appears to be lacking in our business world. Secretaries, in many instances, are perceived as being unintelligent, unambitious, lacking ability and motivation, not being promotable, and as not pursuing an established career path.

Even if managers and employers do not have such a drastic view of their secretaries, many in the secretarial profession feel that their work is trivialized, or at least not recognized, and they do not feel that they are part of the company team.

Further still, the eruption of office technology has altered the secretarial tasks, making them more complex. (Kagan, 1986:105.) This new technology has permitted the secretary to take on more administrative and creative responsibilities.

It is not suprising, then, that employers are finding it more difficult not only to find well-qualified secretaries, but they are also expressing difficulty in keeping the top-notch secretaries.

The factors mentioned above have led to a lag in the business world resulting in human resources not being maximized to their potential. Thus, a new role for secretaries which goes well beyond that of the "just a secretary" traditional position, is evolving. This new role will demand that the educational instituitions work in conjunction with the business community to provide substantial preparation for these secretaries.

Rationale for the Study

In view of the changing role of the secretary, the adequacy of educational preparation needs to be addressed. The continuing education needs of secretaries has not specifically been offered as a possible solution to the issues facing secretaries and their managers. Thus, in addressing a rationale for the study, three areas were dealt with: (1) the image of the secretarial position as well as the changing role of that position, (2) the perspective of the manager or employer in assessing the secretarial profession; and (3) an exploration of the educational shift in our country as it relates to today's secretary.

The area of greatest concern is the image of the secretarial profession, resulting in the underutilization of the secretary's capabilities. Many secretaries crave more responsibility and in-depth work, but they do not know quite how to go about taking on

more of this responsibility. They desire to participate as a team member in the organization and to be recognized for their contributions as such a member. The inappropriate image of the secretary, in many cases, prevents the manager/employer from affording the secretary the opportunities to work toward his/her full potential. Coupled with this is the technological advancements which has increased the complexity of secretarial positions.

The role of the manager/employer in this complex issue can be seen as being caught between "a rock and a hard place". While management may recognize the desires and abilities of the secretary, if a secretary is promoted as a result of his/her increased responsiblity, who will fill that position? Added to this is the issue of increased compensation for such upward mobility. At the same time, many managers/employers still give little recognition to the role of the secretary in the organization, often to the point of that role being insignificant in comparison to the "management team".

At the same time, the shift in the field of higher education in our country has been to an increased enrollment of older students. "No contemporary social circumstance has required such substantial response and innovation from the university as the dramatic shift from first-time, full-time, usually residential

students, to part-time, usually commuting, almost older students. (Hall, 1991:69.) The educational environment has also changed and now includes more informal paths to earning a degree. This could include, but is not limited to, television and videotape courses, correspondence courses, audiocassette courses, computer-based courses, and proficiency exams. Thus, higher education is open to more people.

This shift in education may be one solution to this secretary/employer predicament. By assisting in the continuing education of the secretary as preparation for the individual to acquire more responsibility and creative duties, the employer would maximize human resources while the secretary would be able to plan and to pursue an individual career path. Thus, having secretaries pursue continuing education needs would be of benefit to employee and employer alike, enabling the business world to function at greater levels of productivity and service.

Problem Statement

The major purpose of this study was to assess whether the persons working as secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, have continuing education needs.

Data collected by the study was used to answer the following questions:

1. What is the current educational level of secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, offices?

2. In which subject areas do secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, believe their continuing education requirements to be?

3. What would be the most likely setting in which the secretary would be willing to pursue such courses?

4. What benefits do secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, believe they would acquire by pursuing continuing education? Would a higher wage be a result?

5. Do the secretaries believe that their level of education has resulted in a promotion?

6. Do secretaries currently working in Honolulu, Hawaii, believe that their employer would be willing to increase their salary if they continued their education?

7. Do the secretaries believe that their employer would be willing to pay for any or all of their continuing education costs? If so, which costs do the secretaries believe the employer would be willing to cover?

8. Which factors would most greatly influence the secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, to pursue continuing education needs?

Limitations of the Study

The population was limited to selected secretaries who work in Honolulu, Hawaii, offices. Business and industry categories selected from the Honolulu, Hawaii, Chamber of Commerce membership listing were chosen on the basis of the proficiency of the profession. Thus, secretaries targeted to receive the questionnaire were expected to be more adept in their position than would be a novice.

The questions on the survey about the employers' views of continuing education were answered by their secretaries. Answers to these questions may have been different if these questions were responded to directly by the employers.

Material in the Review of Literature, Chapter 2, and references in other sections of the paper were obtained solely from the library at the University of Hawaii, Manoa Campus, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Summary

The secretarial profession suffers from biases and attitudes attributed to secretaries. This not only results in job dissatisfaction on the part of the secretary, but it also results in human resource utilization deficiencies for the manager/employer. Reasons for this gap between the secretary and

the manager/employer are (1) lack of communication between the parties involved, (2) lack of preparation and planning on the part of the secretary, and (3) conflicting signals given by the manager/employer to the secretary wishing to perform as part of the management team.

One solution, which has not been given much attention would be for the secretaries to pursue continuing education courses.

The major purpose of this study was to assess whether persons working as secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, have continuing education needs.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview

While some secretaries holding that title seem to be content not going beyond their job description, many find having to do little more than clerical work frustrating. (Jackson & Johnson, 1988:39) Yet, in an informal survey conducted of secretaries, "each secretary said she liked the variety of work, which was complex and diversified and added interest, challenge, and stimulation." (Gittler, 1992:18.)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the secretarial occupation is the largest and fastest growing profession in the United States. (Mabry, 1989:42.) On the other hand, there are more career options available to women now than ever before. Thus, states Wendy Eigen, "fewer (women) are choosing the secretarial field because of perceived low pay, low prestige, and restricted career options." (Eigen, 1991:104.)

Complicating the issues of supply and demand, as well as job satisfaction, is the technology which is changing so rapidly, altering the work performed by secretaries and also the performance expected by managers/employers. Consequently, a gap exists in management fully utilizing their secretarial resources,

and the secretarial staff desiring more challenging roles.

There are some in the management ranks who began their "career paths" as secretaries -- individuals who were satisfied with and challenged by this profession, and it was through those very secretarial positions that they were able to "climb the ladder" into management. While this upward mobility into non-secretarial positions is the exception to the rule, the fact that it has been done indicates a way to go about it.

One solution to this crisis was reported in a recent issue of WORKING MOTHER. Harold S. Resnick, Founder and President of Work Systems Assoc., a management consulting firm in Marlboro, MA, recommends that secretaries need to "have a goal that will make you more valuable to the company, then use company-sponsored education as a means of achieving that goal." (Kelly, 1991:26.)

The Secretarial Profession

With the change in our country from an industrialized society to one of information, secretarial opportunities are growing. Consultants note that with the technological advances, "secretaries are assuming positions with greater control over vast information networks." (Mabry, 1989:42) Thus, according to Betsy Lazary, president of StepTakers, an eleven-year-old company which specializes in improving secretary/manager team

performance, "over the past two decades, broad changes in perspective and attitude have had an enormous influence on both the secretarial position and the secretary/manager relationship." (Lazary 1988:9.) These changes have dealt not only with the image of the secretary, but also with the role of the secretary in the management team.

With the "old stereotype" of secretaries being considered mere "clerks", and granted little respect, secretaries have had to deal with low pay, minimal career-opportunities, lack of communication regarding office activities, a non-reciprocal relationship with their boss, feelings of not being appreciated and of being isolated. (Tissue, 1988:50) "The job of the secretary has traditionally been structured as an entry-level, dead-end one, nicknamed the 'secretarial ghetto'." (Hennebach, 1989:44.) Julia Kagan and Julianne Malveaux also found in a survey they conducted that secretaries have a sense of being "invisible" in that many bosses do not see the nature of the work their secretaries perform. (Kagan and Malveaux, 1986:106.) In her article in the TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL, Carol Hennebach reports that secretaries perform critical and often complex organization functions while remaining permanent apprentices. (Hennebach, 1989:44.) Lazary believes that part of

the problem is that "organizations have traditionally considered secretaries categorically rather than individually." (Lazary, 1988:14.)

Presently, there is a "new stereotype" developing, according to Linda Thompson, who is authoring a book entitled Tomorrow's Secretary. Ms. Thompson believes that the secretary is now seen as "an appendage to a computer terminal who can effortlessly process and retype mountains of documents, reports, and papers for numerous executives, producing immaculate printouts complete with graphics." (Bredin 1990:16.)

Since the "new" stereotype is no better than the "old" stereotype, the fact remains that a more well-defined role for the secretary needs to be established. Much of the secretary's notoriety has been and is still related to the level of the manager to whom the secretary reports.

A Gallop Poll survey conducted among secretaries nation-wide for Professional Secretaries International (PSI) was reported in USA TODAY as indicating that the two greatest issues facing office professionals today, were pay and lack of recognition, with the third issue being the need for career paths and ladders for individual advancement. (USA TODAY, 1989:vol. 18:8) It is interesting that prior to the PSI survey, Lazary acknowledged in her book that

> "a secretary's pay usually is not commensurate with the actual duties performed or the level of responsibility assumed, but rather is tied to the level of the manager to whom he or she reports. Education and experience do not necessarily lead to pay increases. And because many organizations do not recognize a career path of the position or otherwise distinguish among secretarial positions, salary spreads are limited." (Lazary, 1988:14.)

Although "secretaries are one of the most vital members of an organization, secretarial work certainly has not been the first profession of choice for the serious career-minded individual." (Lazary, 1988:7.) Segal notes that "as the demands of the (secretarial) job are growing, the talent pool is shrinking." (Segal, 1989:104.) The perceptions noted earlier have, in the past, prevented those desiring to be more than "just a secretary" from entering the secretarial profession.

Despite these problems, Lee Kelly has noted that there is an increase in those using the secretarial position as their starting point. She states that this "includes many women who are satisfied with their work but yearn for more than just the average salary of $21,000." (Kelly, 1991:24.) Yet, there appears to be no well-defined career path for the secretary who wishes to advance from an entry-level position to more challenging assignments. As Breton states, "There are many ways to break the secretarial 'role' by transferring the skills learned as a secretary to administrative and managerial

assignments; but job opportunities will not appear magically." (Breton, 1985:60.)

To help move toward managerial opportunities, secretaries need to be assertive. One suggestion is that a secretary play a more active role in the organization by explaining to the boss how important it is for the secretary to sit in on staff, planning and strategy meetings in order to be well-informed. (Breton, 1985:61.) Concurring, Tissue notes that participation on the management team allows the secretary to be part of a project, thus internalizing company policies and projects, enhancing the secretary's commitment and dedication to the organization. (Tissue, 1988:51.) Harold S. Resnick advises that secretaries tell their boss how much faster he or she could do a job if they took continuing education courses. (Kelly, 1991:26.)

The Position of Management

After reviewing the literature on the secretarial profession, the question still remains as to whether continued education and high performance will gain the secretary the career path he or she desires, in terms of both responsibility and money. Management has looked at the secretarial position as being more of an entry-level position, and "until recently,

businesses have seen little reasons to develop employees on what seemed to be a dead-end career track." (Hennebach, 1989:44.)

Thus, companies are finding themselves in a dilemma as they redefine the role of management. Management ranks are being eliminated as a result of increased technology and office computerization, lagging productivity, and foreign competition; and evidence suggests that this restructuring is affording secretaries an entree into management positions. (Hennebach, 1989:44.) Reporting that many secretarial jobs "have expanded to include tasks that--were they done by non-support-staff men--might well merit a managerial title and pay to match", Kagan and Malveaux observed this dilemma back in 1986. (Kagan, 1986:105.) Troy Segal, in his BUSINESS WEEK article, believes that as these managerial ranks are thinning, the executive secretaries are performing additional duties such as dealing directly with other employees, balancing the departmental budget, tracking the status of projects, and supervising other secretaries. (Segal, 1989:105.) Breton believes that "professional executive secretaries often function as managers without appropriate title or pay." (Breton, 1985:61.)

Carol Moseley Hennebach reported in her article "No More Excuses for Not Training Secretaries" that "the number of women in management doubled between 1974 and 1984, and 90 percent of

those women began as secretaries" and also that "two-thirds of secretaries under the age of 30 say they are actively seeking management positions." (Hennebach, 1989:44) It is understandable, then, that Tissue believes that "the influx of women into managerial roles provides a vicarious experience for many secretaries who view their jobs as a stepping stone" thus "generating expectations for secretaries that they, too, can achieve more if they persist in their efforts." (Tissue, 1988:52.)

As secretaries take on more managerial roles, employers/management need to develop an alternative style of management. Linda Thompson, who is writing a book entitled "Tomorrow's Secretary", would like "the secretary to be seen in the context of a team providing management support services and defining a variety of levels of work including administrative assistance, staff supervision, and budgetary control." (Bredin, 1990:16.) Thus, an effective career structure for secretaries would be based on the responsibilities performed and the secretary's mastery of skills, eliminating notoriety being related to the level of his/her manager. Tissue sees the secretarial role being more integrated as part of the management team leading to increased job satisfaction, resulting in

increased productivity and a stronger organization. (Tissue, 1988:50.)

This new view of management toward the secretarial profession includes incorporating a variety of career development areas. Since "your secretary is an investment", according to Eleanor Vreeland, President of Katharine Gibbs Schools, Inc., "retaining her should be a top priority, and putting some effort into making her work enriching is a small price to pay when compared to her replacement cost." (Vreeland, 1989:18.)

In establishing a successful and mutually satisfying management/secretary relationship, Vreeland recommends that management "structure secretarial jobs as a career path, from junior through executive levels." (Vreeland, 1989:17.) Even if specific "career paths" are not established in a given position, Wogensen recommends that management should still show interest in the professional development of the individual secretary by inquiring about his or her aspirations, and suggesting ways for the secretary to achieve his or her goals. (Wogensen, 1986:34.)

Encouraging one's secretary to join a professional organization, or to attend seminars, workshops, and evening classes allows the secretary to take an active role in her own professional growth. (Vreeland, 1989:18.)

Employers are responding to this gap between secretaries and management. For example, Delco Systems Operations, a business unit of General Motors and a subsidiary of Delco Electronics Corporation, has formulated a task force of office support employees. This task force had as part of its principal objective to

> provide the highest-quality office support to managers and administrators by:
> - Developing a program to prepare secretaries and clerks for greater responsibility;
> - Defining objective criteria for determining levels of responsibility;
> - Defining career paths (Eigen, 1991:104)

According to Hennebach, IBM helps employees set career objectives, with each person having a long-term job-development goal. Then IBM creates an individualized training plan as preparation for the person's next job, including paying for any education needed. (Hennebach, 1989:46.) Vreeland reports that "now we're seeing employers respond to the severe shortage of properly trained secretaries by upgrading in-house training as well as encouraging secretaries to participate in professional seminars." (Vreeland, 1989:18.) Conversely, "many HRD professionals are excited about their secretarial training efforts but discouraged by management resistance. (Hennebach, 1989:46.) She adds that part of the blame is on the training directors because "most have never tried to show management how

secretarial training has benefited their companies." (Hennebach, 1989:46.)

Management needs to develop their team by encouraging the continuing education of secretaries. Richard Plumley, President and CEO of Plumley Cos., Inc., a family-owned automotive supplier in Paris, TN, asserts that "the last ultimate resource for productivity and quality in a business is human potential, and education of workers is an investment that gets paid back very quickly." (Verespej, 1991:28.)

Educational Outlook

One of the most dramatic changes in the late 80's and early 90's in the nation's undergraduate and graduate schools, is the enrollment increase of students aged 25 and older. As reported by Nolte in the Community College Review,

> The American Council on Education (ACE) reported in 1989 that of the 12.5 million students attending institutions of higher education, 43% were part-time. More than five million were over the age of 25. Of the 4.7 million students enrolled in community colleges, 63% attended part-time. The majority of these part-time students were working. (Nolte, 1992:7.)

Tifft adds that the number of students age 25 or older "jumped 79% between 1969 and 1984 and that within a decade, this new group of learners, 60% of whom are women and 70% of whom work

full-time, will make up a majority in college classrooms. (Tifft, 1988:90.)

These workers are continuing their education because of complex changes in the business world. Technological advances, new required skills for positions, international competition, and the global economy are just a few of the issues facing our employing community. Hall further describes these new students in his book, Access through Innovation: New Colleges for New Students as:

1. Students pursuing a regular degree program on a less than full-time basis;
2. Students seeking additional professional training or upgrading on a recurrent part-time basis;
3. Students pursuing a particular interest, whether for credit or not;
4. Students attending credit or non-credit conferences, workshops, or institutes. (Hall, 1991:73)

Kathryn McDonagh, President and CEO of St. Joseph's Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, states that it is the obligation of the employer, if they expect a good product or service, to contribute to the education of the employee. (Eubanks, 1992:22.)

According to Eigen, with the shortage of secretaries, "fewer business colleges and community colleges offer secretarial training." (Eigen, 1991:104.) Thus, many secretaries will be discovering their performance shortcomings and educational needs. One secretary, according to Gittler, "reported that several years

ago her company sent her back to school to learn word processing and computer operations so she would have the same skills as new secretaries entering the company." (Gittler, 1992:18.) Already, "Cornell University works with corporations in the New York City area to help clerical workers who do not have an undergraduate degree. During the year-long program, students learn presentation, business writing, and other professional skills." (Kelly, 1991:25.)

In establishing a career path, secretaries who aggressively seek out learning opportunities not only enhance their skills, but they also indicate to their boss their desire for upward mobility. (Kelly, 1991:25.) Breton suggests that secretaries desiring management roles take courses at night, even if the secretary must pay for it herself; that the secretary should enroll in seminars designed to develop managerial skills; and that the secretary study books on management. (Breton, 1985:60,61.)

Since many companies require a college degree for management positions, secretaries desiring management positions may find themselves needing courses in business administration, organizational development, and management. (Hennebach, 1989:46.)

There are a variety of educational settings available to secretaries to further their education. Best believes that "the diversity of the population and recognition of the barriers that prevent adults from pursuing needed learning activities underscore the urgency of finding ways to make education more accessible." (Best, 1990:26.) Accounting for more than half of the 950 students at St.-Mary-of-the-Woods College in Indiana, women are able to earn degrees through independent study, where they confer with professors by phone and by mail. (Tifft, 1988:90.)

Some colleges award credit for what the secretary has already learned from his or her work experience, proficiency tests may be passed, videotape courses can be taken in the secretary's home, or independent projects may be pursued. (Henderson, 1989:77.) City-Wide Community College in Chicago operates the largest electronic university in the United States, sending out 126 hours of lessons from its own TV station. (Ivey, 1988:109.)

Ivey reports that adult students who account for 42% of those taking college courses electronically utilize software lessons with advanced graphics. (Ivey, 1988:109.)

Some schools have extended their administrative office hours into the evening as well as offering a wider selection of courses

in the evening and on weekends. (Leslie, 1988:56.) Vacation courses, often referred to as "Learning a Vacation" are offered by some educational institutions for the older, working students. (Henderson, 1989:78.)

Some employers offer in-house training. "Although the most extensive, structured, and formal educational programs are usually found at the national and international corporations, small companies are increasingly discovering the importance of in-house educational programs in building and maintaining a competitive workforce." (Hall, 1991:79.) Having the educational institution contract with business and industry works for many higher education providers. As Fischer states,

> Most continuing higher education providers cannot afford to compete in direct mail, mass marketing arena ... An alternative strategy to the direct mail, mass-marketing of open enrollment seminars is to concentrate on contract training with business and industry. In contract training, continuing education activities are designed to meet the unique needs of a specific business firm. (Fischer, 1987:60.)

There are also many incentives for the college to become involved in contract training. They include: increased institutional visibility, enhanced reputation, benefits for faculty (leads to consulting or research opportunities), possible creation of new faculty positions and opportunities (additional contracts), increased community service, involvement in economic development

efforts, and increased political support of the institution. (Fischer, 1987:69.)

In developing an adult-education system, Best recommends that four major goals be addressed: improving access to users, improving accountability, improving program quality and responsiveness, and improving planning and coordination. (Best, 1990:27.)

While the high cost of education may be the most serious obstacle for secretaries pursuing continuing education classes, there is an increase in companies who subsidize at least part of their employees' education costs. (Tifft, 1988:90.) Hall adds that "joining with company-based labor unions through negotiated contract benefits for education, corporate support for education is spreading through all employee levels." (Hall, 1991:79.) Leslie also reports that Congress has amended the rules preventing less than half time students from qualifying for government grants and loans, and now they are able to receive such assistance. (Leslie, 1988:56.)

Summary

In reviewing the current literature, it is noted that the secretarial profession has suffered from negative stereotypes, both traditional and modern. The secretarial position also lacks

a well-defined career path for upward mobility. This puts management in a situation of a decreasing pool of well-qualified secretaries as well as secretaries desiring management positions. Compounding this is the change in technology, thus altering the secretary's role in the organization. One solution to this "gap" is further education for secretaries in order to develop a career path resulting in the more challenging positions desired by secretaries. At the same time, the higher education system is changing in the areas of student population and the educational environment. Both of these changes afford the secretary with greater educational opportunities. Thus, a current study done in a local area assessing the continuing education needs of secretaries could provide helpful information to those educators seeking to assist students in the secretarial vocation with their respective career paths.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURES

The study of the continuing education needs of secretaries was conducted through the use of the following procedures:

1. Review of related literature
2. Development of the survey instrument and transmittal letter
3. Selection of participants in the study
4. Administration of the survey instrument
5. Analysis of data and presentation of findings
6. Drawing conclusions and making recommendations

Review of Related Literature

The study was begun in November 1992 by looking for related articles listed in the EDUCATION INDEX, READERS GUIDE TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE, and BUSINESS PERIODICALS INDEX. Searches for related materials were also done through the use of ERIC and the UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SUBJECT DATABASE.

Useful information obtained from researching the articles, books, and reports, as well as bibliographic data for each, was recorded on 3" by 5" color-coded index cards. These cards were kept on file for future reference.

During the time the study was being done, the writer continued reviewing current journals for pertinent information.

Development of the Survey Instrument and Transmittal Letter

The information gained from the literature review provided the writer with the framework upon which to develop questions for use in the survey instrument.

In January 1993, a rough draft of these questions was mailed to Dr. Norm Millikin, the Chairman of the writer's Graduate Committee, along with a draft of the transmittal letter and a follow-up letter. Dr. Millikin then made suggestions for incorporation into the final drafts.

The final drafts were approved by Dr. Millikin and mailed to 150 head secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, offices.

Selection of Participants for the Study

To collect data for the study, questionnaires were sent to 150 head secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, offices. The offices varied in type and size. The secretaries were asked about the areas in which they needed continuing education, about how they would prefer to pursue continuing education, about what factors would influence their continuance to meet these needs, and about the cooperation and support of their employers if they were to pursue educational goals.

The writer utilized a simple random sample taken from the Chamber of Commerce 1992 Directory of Member firms. The selection process involved the listing of member firms by classification with the elimination of inappropriate classifications such as retail stores, construction firms, as

well as the elimination of classifications in the medical and legal professions since those areas usually require more specialized training in their respective fields which would not be applicable to this study. After deleting the inappropriate classifications, the selected Chamber of Commerce member classifications were then examined in order to delete firms outside of the city of Honolulu. From the remaining list of approximately 1100 firms in Honolulu, every seventh firm was chosen to receive a questionnaire. In case of duplication of firms selected because of a firm being listed in more than one classification, the duplicate was crossed off and member in that classification following the duplicate was chosen to receive a survey.

Administration of the Survey Instrument

A personalized transmittal letter for each head secretary in the sample was printed using the form letters function of Microsoft Works for Windows software on a microcomputer. The transmittal letter plus a numbered questionnaire and self-addressed stamped envelope were mailed on February 8, 1993, to the "Head Secretary" of each firm since the name of the secretary was not contained in Chamber of Commerce Membership Directory. The number on the questionnaire corresponded to the number beside the secretary's address on the master firm list.

As completed questionnaires were received, the writer put a blue line through the firm name on the master firm list. For surveys which were returned unopened by the Post Office, the writer put a red line through the entire firm's line information on the master firm list, with a notation to the right as to the reason for the return. The same red line procedure was followed for firms which returned incomplete surveys because of having "no secretary".

Analysis of Data and Presentation of Findings

Responses from the completed questionnaires were entered into a Microsoft Works for Windows Database where the information was tabulated and compiled by the writer.

Tables were constructed from the compiled information to present the findings in a readable and understandable form. Tables and explanations are presented in Chapter 4.

Drawing Conclusions and Making Recommendations

In studying and analyzing the findings presented in Chapter 4, the writer drew conclusions regarding the continuing education needs of secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, and the interests of those secretaries in pursuing adult continuing education programs. The conclusions are presented in Chapter 5.

As a result of the review of the literature and of the findings, recommendations for adult continuing education programs which provide training for secretaries were made in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents a tabulation and analysis of the data obtained from this survey of secretaries employed in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Each table represents a specific question asked of the secretaries and the data illustrates the responses. Each table is followed by a brief summary of the data and related comments by the writer.

For ease in comparisons, all percentages were rounded to one decimal place; therefore, some column totals may not add to exactly 100.0 percent.

Some of the respondents made additional comments relating to pursuing continuing education courses with the questions whose answer options included "other". Therefore, these comments have been included.

Summary of Respondents

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS

	No.	%
Usable returns	43	28.7
Unusable returns	10	6.7
No reply or undeliverable	97	64.7
TOTALS	150	100.1

Questionnaires were mailed to 150 secretaries who work in Honolulu, Hawaii, offices. As shown in Table 1, fifty three, or 35.4%, of the secretaries responded. Of the 53 respondents, ten did not complete the questionnaire because they did not feel that it pertained to their respective positions held. These questionnaires were, therefore, unusable.

TABLE 2

TYPES OF BUSINESSES EMPLOYING THE 43 RESPONDENTS

Business	No.	%
Accounting Firm	3	6.9
Advertising Firm	1	2.3
Architecture Firm, Planning or Designer	2	4.6
Banking/Financial Firms	5	11.6
Communication	1	2.3
Consulting Firm, Communications	1	2.3
Consulting Firm, Management	1	2.3
Employment	3	6.9
Engineering	1	2.3
Insurance	4	9.3
Investment Securities	1	2.3
Manufacturing	4	9.3
Tourism	3	6.9
Other	13	30.2
Totals	43	99.5

Table 2 shows the types of businesses employing the 48 respondents.

The banking/finance industry employed the largest number of respondents. Five of the respondents, or 12%, were employed in banks.

Four respondents, or 9%, were employed in insurance firms as well as in manufacturing firms, respectively.

The accounting industry, the employment industry, and the tourism industry had 3 respondents, or 7%, each.

Consulting firms and architecture firms, respectively, were represented by two respondents, or 5%. Of the two secretaries employed with consulting firms, one respondent, or 2%, was employed with a communications consulting firm. The other respondent, or 2%, was employed with a management consulting firm.

Each of the following business types were represented by one respondent, or 2%: an advertising firm, a communication firm, an engineering firm, and an investment securities firm.

Thirteen of the respondents, or 30%, worked for businesses other than those listed above. Other types of businesses noted included: an airline, a retail clothing chain, an entertainment company, a hair salon chain, an aviation ground handling service, a trade association, a computer firm, an environmental consulting service, a health-care holding company, a real estate corporation, a modeling agency/school, a business education training institute, and a wholesale distributing company.

TABLE 3

SIZE OF BUSINESSES EMPLOYING THE 43 RESPONDENTS

Number of Persons Employed by Businesses	Part Time		Full Time	
	No.	%	No.	%
1 - 10	14	32.5	13	30.2
11 - 25	2	4.6	7	16.2
26 - 100	2	4.6	5	11.6
Over 100	3	6.9	14	32.5
No Response	22	51.1	4	9.3
Totals	43	99.7	43	99.8

Table 3 shows the size of businesses which employed the 43 respondents.

Small businesses with 1-10 part-time employees employed the largest number of respondents: 14, or 33%. Businesses with 11-25 part-time employees were represented by 2 respondents, or 5%. Businesses with 26-100 part-time employees employed 2 respondents, or 5%. Three of the respondents, or 7%, were employed by firms employing over 100 part-time employees. Twenty-two of the respondents, or 51%, did not indicate part-time employees as part of their employer's work force.

Big businesses with over 100 full-time employees employed the largest number of respondents: 14 respondents, or 33%. Small businesses with less than 10 full-time employees followed,

representing 13 of the respondents, or 30%. Seven of the respondents, or 16%, were employed by businesses with 11-25 full-time employees. Businesses employing 26-100 full-time employees employed 5 respondents, or 12%. Four of the respondents, or 9%, did not indicate that full-time employees were part of their employer's work force.

Education of Respondents

TABLE 4

EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE 43 RESPONDENTS

Highest Level of Education	No.	%
Less than High School	0	0
4 years of High School/GED	9	20.9
1-3 years of College	12	27.9
4+ years of College	12	27.9
1-2 Years of Private Business School	10	23.2
Totals	43	99.9

The highest level of education of the 43 respondents is shown in Table 4. None of the respondents achieved less than a high school diploma. Nine of the respondents, or 20.9%, have completed high school or have taken the GED. Twelve of the respondents, or 27.9%, have had 1-3 years of college.

Twelve of the respondents, or 27.9%, have had four or more years of college. Ten of the respondents, or 23.2%, have had one to two years of private business school training.

These findings indicate that almost 80% of the secretaries in Honolulu have already had some type of post-high school education and slightly more than one-half of the secretaries in Honolulu have had some college.

TABLE 5

CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS OF THE 43 RESPONDENTS

Subject Area	No.	%
Computer Software	28	65.1
Management	19	44.1
Human Resources	17	39.5
Communication	13	30.2
Personal Development	12	27.9
Accounting	11	25.5
Public Relations	9	20.9
Customer Service	5	11.6
Marketing	4	9.3
Other	3	6.9
Economics	2	4.6
Advertising	1	2.3

Table 5 shows the continuing education needs of the respondents by subject area. The respondents were permitted to select more than one subject area. Two of the 43 respondents, or 4.6%, did not indicate an area of continuing education needs.

The most frequent area of continuing education needs was computer software. This area was reported by 65.1% of the respondents.

In order of frequency, the other continuing education subject areas were management, human resources, communication, personal development, accounting, public relations, customer service, marketing, economics, and advertising.

These findings indicate an impressive need for continuing education courses by secretaries in Honolulu.

TABLE 6

SETTING PREFERRED FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION PURSUITS

Environment	No.	%
Community College	20	46.5
State University	14	32.5
In-Service Training	14	32.5
Local Public School (ACE)	11	25.5
Correspondence Course	6	13.9
Private Business School	5	11.6
Audio-Tape Courses	4	9.3
TV & Videotaped Courses	3	6.9

Table 6 shows the setting in which the respondents would most likely pursue adult continuing education. The most frequent setting for academic advancement was attending the community college. This was reported by almost half (46.5%) of the respondents. The next two settings of preference were the state university and in-service (on-the-job) training. These two settings were each reported by 32.5% of the respondents. The other settings most likely to be utilized, in order of frequency, were the local public school (adult continuing education), correspondence courses, the private business school, audio-tape courses, and then TV and videotaped courses.

These findings indicate that the majority of secretaries in Honolulu would prefer to take courses in a college setting. This amount, 79% of respondents, is a significant amount for the higher education community.

Importance of Continuing Education

The secretaries surveyed were asked to answer two questions relating to their views of the importance of continuing education courses.

TABLE 7

DOES CONTINUING EDUCATION EARN SECRETARIES A HIGHER WAGE?
(VIEW OF SECRETARIES RESPONDING)

Answer	No.	%
Yes	17	39.5
No	8	18.6
Unsure	18	41.8
Totals	43	99.9

The results of the first question, "Do you believe you would earn a higher wage if you completed some continuing education courses?," are shown in Table 7. Almost half of the secretaries, 18 respondents or 41.8%, were unsure whether they would receive a higher wage resulting from their continuing education efforts. Seventeen of the respondents, or 39.5%, felt that their

continuing education courses resulted in their receiving a higher wage. Eight of the respondents, or 18.6%, felt that continuing their education would not result in a higher wage.

Apparently, secretaries do not think that taking continuing education courses would have a significant impact on their wages.

TABLE 8

HAS LEVEL OF EDUCATION IMPACTED PROMOTION

Answer	No.	%
Yes	10	23.2
No	25	58.1
Unsure	8	18.6
Totals	43	99.9

The second question about the importance of pursuing continuing education courses asked to the secretaries was "Have you ever been promoted because of your level of education?" The results of this question are shown in Table 8.

Slightly more than half of the secretaries reported that they had never been promoted because of their level of education. Ten of the respondents, or 23.2%, said they had been promoted because of their level of education. Eight respondents, or 18.6%, were unsure whether their level of education was instrumental in their being promoted.

The responses to the promotion question are somewhat inconsistent with the wage rate data reported in Table 7. Almost 40% of the respondents believe that they would earn a higher wage as a result of furthering their education, while only 23.2% of the respondents believe that such an investment would result in a promotion. It appears that pursing continuing education courses will have a greater influence on wage increases than on promotion decisions in Honolulu offices.

Importance of Continuing Education to Employers as Seen by Their Secretaries

Three questions were designed to get a view of the importance of continuing education to the employers through the eyes of their secretaries.

TABLE 9

ARE EMPLOYERS WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR EDUCATION?
(VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS)

Answer	No.	%
Yes	11	25.5
No	10	23.2
Unsure	22	51.1
Totals	43	99.8

The first question was "Is your employer willing to pay more for a secretary who continues his/her education?" As Table 9 shows, only one-fourth of the respondents felt that their employers would recognize their additional education in the form of increased wages. Ten respondents, or 23.2%, indicated that their employers would not increase their salary if they pursued continuing education courses. Half of the respondents were unsure whether their employers would be willing to pay more for a secretary who continues his/her education.

These findings, again, show that continuing one's education has little value to secretaries in relation to their wage rates.

TABLE 10

ARE EMPLOYERS WILLING TO PAY FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Answer	No.	%
Yes	21	48.8
No	13	30.2
Unsure	9	20.9
Totals	43	99.9

The second question asked to determine the importance employers place on secretaries continuing their education was "Is your employer willing to pay any or all of your continuing education costs?" Table 10 shows that almost half of the

respondents, 48.8%, felt that their employers would be willing to help pay any or all of the respondents continuing education costs. While 13 of the respondents, or 30.2%, did not feel their employer would be willing to offer financial assistance for continuing education courses, another nine respondents, or 20.9%, were unsure of their employer's willingness to help financially. These results indicate that while employers are not always willing to compensate employees in a job-related manner for furthering their education, almost half of the employers in Honolulu are willing to assist in a financial way for their employees to do so. This is not an overwhelming percentage of employers willing to help; however, it reflects the highest level of interest indicated in this study.

TABLE 11

IN WHAT WAYS ARE EMPLOYERS WILLING TO HELP EMPLOYEES PURSUE THEIR CONTINUING EDUCATION?

Method	No.	%
Full Tuition Reimbursement	16	37.2
Time off from work	12	27.9
Partial Tuition Reimbursement	9	20.9
Textbook Reimbursement	5	11.6
Other	2	4.6

The third question asked to get a feel for the importance employers place on their secretaries furthering their education was "If your employer is willing to help you pursue continuing education courses, in what way(s) is/are your employer willing to help?" Table 11 shows that 16 of the respondents, or 37.2%, feel that their employers would help by reimbursing the full-tuition costs of the secretary. Only 12 respondents, or 27.9%, indicated that their employers would allow time off from regular work hours for the secretaries to attend classes. Nine of the respondents, or 20.9%, believe that their employers would reimburse them for part of their tuition costs. Only five respondents, or 11.6%, indicated that they believe their employers would reimburse them for the cost of the textbooks. Two respondents, or 4.6%, indicated "other" ways which included: one respondent adding that the bank offers and pays for "Institute of Financial Education Courses", as well as offering and paying for classes at community colleges, private schools and the university; and the other respondent adding that her trade association pays for seminars and the registration fee for mini-courses.

The data indicates that employers, in general, are willing to assist employees in a variety of ways in pursuing additional education. Over one-half of the respondents indicated that their

employer would be willing to reimburse them for part or all of the tuition costs.

Personal Importance of Continuing Education

The next question on the survey sought to find out why secretaries would want to continue their education.

TABLE 12

FACTORS INFLUENCING SECRETARIES PURSUING CONTINUING EDUCATION

Answer	No.	%
Belief/knowledge that furthering your education would actually enhance your career path	26	60.4
Attending classes during work hours ("comp time")	11	25.5
Tuition assistance (partial or full) from employer	11	25.5
Support of family members	5	11.6
Other	4	9.3
Textbook reimbursement from employer	3	6.9

The question asked to determine which factors influence a secretary in pursuing continuing education was "Which of the following would most greatly influence your decision to further your education?" The results of this question are shown in Table 12.

More than half of the respondents, 60.4%, indicated that the greatest influence on their pursuing continuing education courses would be their belief/knowledge that furthering their education would actually enhance their career path.

Eleven of the respondents, or 25.5%, indicated that attending class during work hours would most greatly influence their decision to pursue their education.

Considering tuition assistance, whether partial or full reimbursement, to be a main contributing factor to pursuing continuing education courses were eleven respondents, or 25.5%.

The support of family members ranked low as an important factor in pursing continuing education courses, with only 5 respondents, or 11.6%, indicating this influence.

Four of the respondents, or 9.3%, indicated "other" factors influencing their pursuit of continuing education courses, which included: self-fulfillment, personal benefit, a higher salary level, and the joy of learning.

Textbook reimbursement from the employer was responded to by only 3 secretaries, or 6.9%.

These findings support the earlier findings of this study where the financial aspects of continuing education, whether receiving a pay increase as a result of continuing education or whether the employer financially supports continuing education,

are not a significant factor influencing secretaries in Honolulu to pursue their continuing education needs.

This data clearly shows that most secretaries in Honolulu pursue or would consider pursuing continuing education courses as a means to enhance their career path.

Characteristics of Respondents

TABLE 13

GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Answer	No.	%
Male	1	2.3
Female	42	97.6
Totals	43	99.9

The gender of the 43 respondents is reported in Table 13.

Forty-two of the respondents, or 97.6%, were female. One respondent, or 2.3%, was male.

TABLE 14

AGE OF THE 43 RESPONDENTS

Age Range	No.	%
Under 25	6	13.9
25 - 35	16	37.2
36 - 45	12	27.9
46+	9	20.9
Totals	43	99.9

The age range of the 43 respondents is shown in Table 14. Sixteen respondents, or 37.2%, were between the ages of 25 - 35.

Twelve of the respondents, or 27.9%, were between the ages of 36 - 45. Nine of the respondents, or 20.9%, were age 46 or over. Under the age of 25 were only 6 respondents, or 13.9%.

TABLE 15

HOURLY WAGE OF THE 43 RESPONDENTS

Wage Range	No.	%
$3.35 to $5.00 an hour	0	0
$5.01 to $7.00 an hour	1	2.3
$7.01 to $10.00 an hour	6	13.9
Over $10.00 an hour	35	81.3
No response	1	2.3
Totals	43	99.8

Table 15 shows the hourly wage range for the 43 respondents. There were no respondents earning the lowest salary range of $3.35 to $5.00 per hour. One respondent, or 2.3%, earned wages between $5.01 and $7.00 per hour.

Six of the respondents, or 13.9%, earned wages in the range of $7.01 to $10.00 per hour. Thirty-five, or 81.3%, earned wages over $10.00 per hour. One secretary chose to not respond to this question.

These findings indicate that over 95% of the secretaries in Honolulu make over $7.00 an hour, and four-fifths of the secretaries in Honolulu make over $10 an hour.

TABLE 16

JOB TITLES OF 43 RESPONDENTS

Job Title	No.	%
Administrative Assistant; Administrative Secretary; Executive Assistant; Executive Secretary	17	39.5
Secretary	7	16.2
Office Manager	4	9.3
Other	12	27.9
No Response	3	6.9
Totals	43	99.8

The job titles provided by the respondents on the questionnaires were applied by the writer to the groups shown in Table 16.

Seventeen of the respondents, or 39.5%, had job titles such as administrative assistant, administrative secretary, executive assistant, or executive secretary.

The job title of secretary was given to seven of the respondents, or 16.2%. Office manager was the job title of 4 of the 43 respondents, or 9.3%.

Twelve of the respondents, or 27.9%, had a variety of job titles. These other titles included administrative supervisor, vice-president of administration, front desk reception, associate, corporate secretary, director of administration, personnel assistant, assistant to the general manager, insurance clerk, director of franchise operations, branch operations supervisor and administrator.

Three of the respondents, or 6.9%, did not indicate a job title.

TABLE 17

SECRETARIAL EXPERIENCE OF 43 RESPONDENTS

Amount of Time	No.	%
Less than 1 year	4	9.3
1 year to 5 years	15	34.8
6 years to 10 years	6	13.9
11 or more years	18	41.8
Totals	43	99.8

The number of years that the respondents have been in the secretarial field are shown in Table 17. Four respondents, or 9.3%, have less than one year in the secretarial field. Fifteen of the respondents, or 34.8%, have been a secretary between 1 and five years.

Six of the respondents, or 13.9%, have had between six to ten years of experience as a secretary. Those respondents having eleven or more years as a secretary numbered 18, or 41.8%.

These findings show that more than 50% of the secretaries in Honolulu have more than six years of experience in the secretarial field.

Summary

In summary, the findings of the study show that the value of pursuing continuing education courses for secretaries in

Honolulu, relative to salary and promotion, is limited.

However, the findings of the study also show that the value of pursuing continuing education courses for secretaries in Honolulu, relative to their career path, is important to those who responded.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to assess the need for continuing education courses for those persons working in the secretarial field in Honolulu, Hawaii. The first part of this chapter presents a general conclusion about each of the questions presented in Chapter 1. A brief summary of the findings of the study which lead to the conclusion is also included.

The second part of this chapter lists the recommendations made by the writer about continuing education courses and their part in relation to the business community, specifically with the secretarial career path. These recommendations are based upon the findings of this study as well as on the review of the literature.

Conclusions

The majority of secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii, have had some post-high school education. Most of these secretaries have had some college.

1. Thirty-four, or 79%, of the 43 respondents continued their education beyond the high school level.

2. Of these 34 respondents, 35% have had 1 - 3 years of college, 35% have had 4 or more years of college, and 30% have had 1 - 2 years of education at a private business school.

The writer was unable to conclude whether these levels of education were pursued prior to the respondents entering the secretarial field or whether they were pursued after the respondents were in the secretarial field. However, the data did show a tremendous need for the secretaries to continue their educational pursuits.

1. Forty-one, or 95.3%, of the respondents indicated a continuing education need in at least one subject area.

2. Of the respondents indicating a need for continuing education, 56% selected two or three subject areas, while another 26% indicated four or more subject areas of continuing education needs.

3. Computer software as a continuing education need was selected by 68.3% of the respondents indicating their continuing education needs.

4. Almost half of the respondents who felt they needed further education believed this need to be in the area of management.

Many secretaries in Honolulu pursuing adult continuing education courses would prefer to do so in a college or university setting.

1. Of the respondents having post-high school education, 70.5% of those have attended college.

2. The community college setting was the most frequently selected setting, chosen by almost 50% of the respondents. The state university setting was selected by 32.5% of the respondents.

The majority of respondents do not believe that taking continuing education courses would have a significant impact on

their wages. However, a greater percentage of those respondents with college fell into the higher wage ranges than did those without college.

1. Less than 40% of the respondents believe that pursuing continuing education courses would earn them a higher wage.

2. All of the respondents with 4 or more years of college were earning more than $10.00 an hour. Only 87.5% of those without any post-high school education earned wages in that range; these respondents also had c considerable more experience in the secretarial field than those with 4 or more years of college, thus adding another variable to the level of wages earned.

3. Of the 35 respondents earning more than $10.00 an hour, 80% had some post-high school education.

In most cases, promotion is not influenced by the level of a secretary's education.

1. Nearly three-fifths of the respondents did not believe they had ever been promoted because of their level of education.

2. Only 23.2% of the respondents believed they had been promoted because of their level of education.

While the employers of the 43 respondents have not indicated to the secretaries overwhelming motivation for the secretaries to pursue additional education, there is a distinction in the method of compensation. The attitudes of the employers, from the respondent's perspective, indicate that employers are supportive to the extent of offering the secretary financial assistance more

than they are willing to compensate the secretary in relation to salary or promotion.

1. Only 25.5% of the respondents believe that their employer would be willing to increase the salary for the secretary who continues her education.

2. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents do not believe that their level of education has impacted promotion.

3. Almost half of the respondents believe that their employer is willing to help subsidize, in some way, their continuing education efforts.

The majority of secretaries in Honolulu who pursue or would consider pursuing continuing education courses would tend to do so to enhance their career path.

1. Twenty-six, or 60.4%, of the respondents indicated that the factor which would most greatly influence their decision to further their education would be their belief/knowledge that furthering their education would actually enhance their career path.

2. Almost half of the respondents listed a need for further education to be in the area of management.

Assistance from the employer is not a significant deciding factor for the secretaries wishing to further their education.

1. Only one-forth of the respondents listed "comp time" as a factor influencing their decision to pursue continuing education courses.

2. Tuition assistance from the employer was indicated by only one-forth of the respondents as being an influential factor.

3. Only about 7% of the respondents felt that textbook reimbursement would be a factor influencing their decision to continue their education.

In almost all of the cases, having the support within their personal life from family members does not play an influential role when the respondents wish to pursue their education.

1. Only 5% of the respondents felt that the support of their family members would be a factor influencing their educational pursuits.

Communication in the business community between the employer and the secretary is not at a level which benefits either party.

1. Almost forty two percent of the respondents were "unsure" of their belief that if they continued their education, they would earn a higher wage.

2. More than half of the secretaries were "unsure" whether their employer would be willing to pay more for a secretary who continued her education.

Recommendations

The population of this study was limited to secretaries in Honolulu, Hawaii; thus, the recommendations made by the writer in the following paragraphs are directed specifically toward the adult continuing education programs offered in Honolulu. However, some of the recommendations may be appropriate to other continuing education programs, especially those offered within the state of Hawaii.

1. The writer recommends that business educators at the high school and community college secretarial science levels prepare their secretarial students, in a practical way, for the

varied perceptions of the secretarial vocation within the business community. Many instances of secretaries being referred to as "just a secretary" could be better dealt with and possibly eliminated if the student is made aware of the biases which exist with some individuals or organizations.

2. For the high school and community college secretarial science business educators, the writer also recommends that the students be challenged to develop a prospective career path. This will enable the students not only to plan their goals within the business vocation, but also to help foster proper communication with employers on the direction which the secretary wishes to pursue. The purpose should be to help eliminate secretarial job dissatisfaction.

3. Given the amount of post-high school education among the secretaries, as well as the high interest level represented by the data, an effort should be made by the business educators in Honolulu, Hawaii, to develop a close working relationship with the business community, specifically employers and their secretaries. Thus, the writer recommends that the Hawaii university system develop a market strategy and target the secretaries in Honolulu to meet their continuing education needs. This should include educating secretaries as to the selection of courses available to them.

4. The writer also recommends that the community college or the university offer a "career path counseling" seminar for secretaries in the community. Not only would this action attract future students, but it would also provide good community relations.

5. Employers need to be mindful of the benefits to their organization when a secretary wishes to pursue continuing education courses. Hence, the writer also recommends that a seminar be developed and facilitated by the College of Business faculty whereby the local employers would be made aware of the variety of secretarial career paths. The importance of career path planning for secretaries should be integrated as well as the benefits to and the involvement of the employer.

6. The writer also recommends that the Communications department, in coordination with the Business department, at the community college or university level establish a seminar to improve employer-secretary (or management-secretary) communications. Special emphasis should be given on the opportunities for pursuing one's career path within an organization.

7. The writer recommends that further research be done on the advantages to secretaries pursuing adult continuing education courses from the perspective of the employer. This type of a

study may help to improve the "uncertainty" of the secretaries regarding promotion and wage increases resulting from their continuing education pursuits. This study did not address the employer's viewpoint of their secretary's continuing education needs.

Appendix A - Transmittal Letter

February 8, 1993

Head Secretary
(Company)
(Address)
Honolulu, HI (Zip)

Dear Secretary:

As a former secretary and a business educator, I am very concerned with teaching secretarial students what to expect in their chosen field. Continuing education for secretaries is a concern as secretaries prepare for and follow a chosen career path. As part of my master's program, I would like to find out about the continuing education needs of secretaries. To accomplish this, I am surveying secretaries in Honolulu.

I am asking for your help in completing the enclosed questionnaire on your continuing education needs. The results of this survey will be used to better address educational needs of future secretaries and also to allow students "a glimpse into their future" so they may make informative decisions as they prepare for their careers.

Would you please take a few moments of your time to complete and return the questionnaire in the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope. Thank you, in advance, for your time and your courtesy.

Sincerely,

Naomi Woienski
1292 Tampa Drive
Honolulu, HI 96819

Enclosures: Questionnaire
Stamped, addressed envelope

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

P.S. If you would like a copy of the survey results, please complete the information below and return it to me with your questionnaire.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

_____

Appendix B - Survey Instrument

Secretarial Continuing Education Survey
February 1993

For the following questions, please check the applicable response.

Business Data

1. In what type of business are you employed?

____ accounting firm
____ advertising firm
____ architect, planner, designer
____ banking and/or finance
____ communication
____ employment
____ engineering
____ insurance
____ investment securities
____ manufacturing
____ tourism
____ consulting firm:
___ bus/econ/finance
___ communications
___ management
___ planning & research
____ meeting/convention planning
____ other (please specify)
_____

2. How many people are employed in your business?

part-time: ____ 1-10 ____ 11-25 ____ 26-100 ____ over 100
full-time: ____ 1-10 ____ 11-25 ____ 26-100 ____ over 100

Education Data

3. What is your highest level of education?

____ less than H.S.
____ 1-3 yrs college
____ 1-2 yrs private business school
____ 4 yrs of H.S./GED
____ 4+ yrs of college

4. In what areas do you believe your continuing education needs to be? (you may check more than one)

____ accounting
____ advertising
____ communication
____ computer software
____ customer service
____ economics
____ human resources
____ management
____ marketing
____ personal development
____ public relations
____ other (please specify)
_____

5. In which setting would you most likely pursue adult continuing education?

____ audio-tape course
____ community college
____ correspondence course
____ in-service training on the job
____ local public school (adult continuing education)
____ private business school
____ state university
____ TV & videotaped courses

6. Do you believe you would earn a higher wage if you completed some continuing education courses?

____ yes ____ no ____ unsure

7. Have you ever been promoted because of your level of education?
   ____ yes ____ no ____ unsure

8. Is your employer willing to pay more for a secretary who continues his/her education?
   ____ yes ____ no ____ unsure

9. Is your employer willing to pay any or all of your continuing education costs?
   ____ yes ____ no ____ unsure

10. If your employer is willing to help you pursue continuing education courses, in what way(s) is/are your employer willing to help?
   ____ full tuition reimbursement
   ____ partial tuition reimbursement
   ____ textbook reimbursement
   ____ time off from regular work hours to attend class
   ____ other _____

11. Which of the following would most greatly influence your decision to further your education?
   ____ attending class during work hours ("comp time")
   ____ belief/knowledge that furthering your education would actually enhance your career path
   ____ textbook reimbursement from employer
   ____ tuition assistance (partial or full) from employer
   ____ support of family members
   ____ other _____

For analysis purposes, would you please provide the following information:

12. ____ Male
   ____ Female

13. Your age
   ____ under 25 ____ 36-45
   ____ 25-35 ____ 46+

14. In what range is your current hourly salary?
   ____ $3.35 - $5.00 ____ $7.01 - $10.00
   ____ $5.01 - $7.00 ____ over $10.00

15. What is your job title? _____

16. Number of years you have been a secretary
   ____ less than 1 ____ 6 - 10
   ____ 1 - 5 ____ 11+

Thank you for your assistance!

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