

1958

A Survey of the Educational and Personal Characteristics Required for Initial Employment of Accountants in a Selected Group of Iowa Industries

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**A SURVEY OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS
REQUIRED FOR INITIAL EMPLOYMENT OF ACCOUNTANTS
IN A SELECTED GROUP OF IOWA INDUSTRIES**

A Thesis

Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

IOWA STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

by

Leonard Eugene Bennett

May 1958

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Entitled: **A Survey of the Educational and Personal Characteristics
Required for Initial Employment of Accountants in A
Selected Group of Iowa Industries.**

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the most dynamic characteristics of today's society is found in its complex and everchanging economic structure. These characteristics have been enhanced by such elements as the growth of corporate enterprise, greater governmental regulations of business, and increased demands by consumers for more business services. With the increase of these complexities, the need for accurate and readily understood records is great. Therefore, the need for specialists who can understand, prepare, and interpret these records becomes more and more important. It is the function of financial accounting to give expression to these records and to make the activities of a business understandable. This activity is the responsibility of the accountant. Thus, the importance to business of having a well-trained accountant who can assume these responsibilities with a minimum of on-the-job training would seem to be obvious.

Over a period of years, educators have attempted through research and other means to accumulate data on business occupations. With these data college and university faculties have attempted to meet adequately the demands of the employer through the proper training of future employees. Although college and university faculties have been quite active in this respect in the past, the practice of surveying business communities and analyzing business occupations might well be extended by business educators to determine the requirements set up by employers in various areas.

One area of business in which there is constant change and in which colleges and universities need to keep up-to-date is the field of financial accounting. In order to provide business and industry with a high caliber of accounting personnel colleges and universities must keep abreast of the most modern professional techniques, equipment available, and managerial practices.

At the annual meeting of the American Accounting Association in Philadelphia, August 31, 1955, the problem of the accounting curriculum was one of the subjects of discussion. Out of this discussion a paper was developed by Harold Q. Langenderfer, Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina, and Ernest H. Weinwurm, Associate Professor, DePaul University, in which they stated that there are "existing inadequacies of the accounting curricula." These are:

(1) inadequate training of accounting teachers toward meeting the needs of business; (2) failure of writers and publishers of accounting textbooks (with some exceptions) to provide a product which conforms to those needs; (3) lack of training of students in the solution of business problems and the proper analysis of more complex business situations (overemphasis of the how of doing things over the why).

Suggestions for improvement listed by these teachers included the following:

Recognize what the needs of students are and then adopt the curriculum to meet these needs. In order to do this, it will be necessary to do research to determine what areas of knowledge, if any, can best be imported in the classroom, and which areas might be more efficiently and effectively carried on by doctoral students.¹

1. Harold Q. Langenderfer, and Ernest H. Weinwurm, "Bringing Accounting Curricula Up-To-Date," The Accounting Review 31: 423-430; July, 1956.

Thus, the problem of the composition of the accounting curriculum at the collegiate level, and its solution, seems to be one of the current problems of schools of business and of real concern to business educators.

If it is the job of the colleges and universities to educate the accounting student so that he will have the qualifications desired by business, then the surveying of business and industrial practices should be of the greatest importance. It is only by the surveying of business and industry that their requirements will become known to the colleges and universities. Until the educational requirements desired by business and industry for beginning accountants have been determined and presented to curriculum planners, those in charge of the accounting curriculums cannot be sure they are doing their jobs properly.

The relationship between those who plan curriculums in colleges and employers in business and industry must be fully understood by each in order to analyze mutual problems for their eventual solution. Steps to accomplish this goal can only be done cooperatively. Business and industry must let the colleges and universities know what training they desire for accountants and where the educational process needs to be strengthened. These data can then be used by college curriculum planners to modernize their offerings.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to gather data pertaining to the educational and personal characteristics required for initial employment of accountants in a selected group of Iowa industries. These

data were then to be analyzed and interpreted in such a manner that they would be helpful to accounting students and curriculum planners of accounting courses.

Specifically, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. Does the instruction and training given by the Iowa colleges and universities, as evaluated by the employer, adequately prepare students to enter employment as beginning accountants in Iowa industries?
2. What do supervising accountants and personnel managers consider to be desirable training qualifications for beginning accountants?
3. What suggestions do the accounting supervisors and personnel managers of Iowa's major industries have for the improvement of present accounting curriculums?
4. What are the employment possibilities and requirements, other than educational, for students graduating as prospective accountants?
5. What additional occupational information for accounting students might be of use to them which is not included in the foregoing?

It was thought that the answers to these questions should give a fairly accurate indication of the kind of training needed to prepare accounting majors for their future work within the limitations set forth.

II. PROCEDURE FOLLOWED IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM

Several procedures were considered as a reliable and practical means to collect the desired data for this study. These procedures were the personal interview and the questionnaire survey. The personal interview may have some advantages such as the personal contact with the respondent, possible better answers from the respondent due to increased clarity of the questions asked, and the possibility of obtaining more information. However, due to such factors as the wide geographical location of the selected industries, the great amount of time which would be needed, and the cost it was decided to use the questionnaire. The questionnaire receives wide, and frequently justifiable, criticism as a tool of research, but it was felt that in this case its use was defensible because of the type of data sought.

The first step in the making of the survey was that of devising the questionnaire. An effort was made to keep the questionnaire as brief and relevant to the purpose of the study as possible. It was felt that the greatest cooperation could be secured from the respondents if they were spared unnecessarily lengthy and tedious questions and answers. Therefore, brevity and relevance were the qualities sought in its design.

A tentative questionnaire encompassing the data desired was developed. Three types of data were asked for. These were (1) educational requirements for beginning accountants, (2) employment practices in employing beginning accountants, and (3) miscellaneous information which might be of interest to the accounting student. In order to determine the effectiveness of the questionnaire for use in collecting the

information desired, executives of two major industries in Waterloo, Iowa, were personally interviewed; a personnel manager and an assistant secretary-treasurer. Much time was spent with these individuals who were asked to provide suggestions and recommendations for improving the questionnaire so that the answers obtained would provide the most complete data. The questionnaire was then revised in accordance with the suggestions and recommendations of these individuals. A copy of the questionnaire used is shown in Appendix A.

A second step in obtaining the data was that of selecting the industries to be surveyed. A list was compiled of Iowa industries with 500 or more employees from a master list of all Iowa industries prepared by the Iowa Development Commission. It was assumed that industries of this size would provide a reliable cross section of those industries employing the majority of accountants in Iowa. There were 65 industries in Iowa of this classification according to the handbook of the Iowa Development Commission.²

After the questionnaire was developed in its final form, it was mailed to the personnel managers of the selected industries. In a letter accompanying the questionnaire it was suggested that the personnel managers cooperate with the head of the accounting department when answering the questions. It was found, as shown in Tables I and II, that in many cases the personnel manager forwarded the questionnaire to the head of the accounting department who supplied the majority of the answers.

2. Iowa Development Commission, Market and Research Division, Directory of Iowa Manufacturers. Des Moines: The Commission, 1955.

TABLE I

DATA CONCERNING THE 34 IOWA INDUSTRIES WHO COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Industry	Title of Respondents*	Title of Persons Employing Beginning Accountants*	Number of Employees	Number of Accountants
Albertson & Company, Inc.	Personnel Director	Vice President, Personnel Director	400	5
Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company	General Auditor	General Auditor	**	**
Aluminum Company of America	Office Manager	Office Manager	2,100	27
Carr, Adams & Collier Company	Controller	Controller	700	2
Case, J. I., Company	Industrial Relations Supervisor	Employment Manager, Works Auditor	1,900	12
Chamberlain Corporation	Assistant Treasurer	Assistant Treasurer	700	9
Clinton Corn Processing Company	Controller	Controller	1,500	15
Clinton Machine Company	Controller	Controller	1,800	2
Collins Radio Company	Assistant Director Treasurer's Division	Assistant Director Treasurer's Division, Chief Accountant	10,000	Approx. 150
Decker, Jacob E., & Sons	Plant Controller	Plant Controller	1,600	15

TABLE I (continued)

Name of Industry	Title of Respondent*	Title of Persons Employing Beginning Accountants*	Number of Employees	Number of Accountants
Des Moines Register and Tribune Company	Assistant Business Manager	Controller, Auditor	1,100	10
Dryden Rubber Division Sheller Mfg. Corp.	Personnel Manager	Personnel Manager, Plant Controller	1,000	4
Hormel, George A., Company	Asst. Controller	**	9,000	Approx. 150
Hubinger Company, The	Secretary	Secretary, Treasurer	600	5
Iowa Packing Company	Auditor	Auditor	1,000	8
John Deere Des Moines Works	Works Auditor	Works Auditor, Asst. Works Auditor	1,500	15
John Deere Dubuque Tractor Works	Works Auditor	Works Auditor	1,700	10
John Deere Ottumwa Works	Personnel Director, Works Auditor	General Accounting Supervisor, Cost Accounting Supervisor, I.B.M. Supervisor	1,300	28
John Deere Waterloo Tractor Works	General Auditor	General Auditor, Cost Survey Supervisor, Materials Engineering Supervisor	5,000	25

TABLE I (continued)

Name of Industry	Title of Respondent*	Title of Persons Employing Beginning Accountants*	Number of Employees	Number of Accountants
Lennox Industries Inc., Marshalltown Plant	Office Manager	Office Manager, Controller	750	9
Lennox Industries Inc., Des Moines Plant	Auditor, Office Manager	Auditor, Office Manager	216	4
Link Belt Speeder Corp.	Employment Manager	Treasurer	700	17
Maytag Company, The	Asst. Secretary	A Hiring Committee	4,000	25
Meredith Publishing Company	Chief Accountant	Chief Accountant, Controller	1,900	14
Metz Baking Company	Controller	Controller	700	15
Morrell, John, & Company	Office Manager	Office Manager	3,350	10
National Carbon Co., Division of Union Carbide Corp.	Director of Accounting and Budgets	Office Manager	**	**
Oscar Mayer & Co., Inc.	Controller	Controller, Accounting Managers, Manager of Methods & Procedures	8,400	120
Pioneer Central Division- Bendix Aviation Corp.	Director of Industrial Relations	Comptroller, Factory Accountant, General Accountant	2,000	20

TABLE I (continued)

Name of Industry	Title of Respondent*	Title of Persons Employing Beginning Accountants*	Number of Employees	Number of Accountants
Pittsburgh-Des Moines Steel Company	Chief Accountant	Chief Accountant (Approved by General Manager)	800	2
Rolscreen Company	Office Manager	Office Manager	550	8
Rath Packing Company, The	Office Manager	Controller, Chief Accountant, Manager Cost Accounting	7,500	50
Sheaffer, W. A., Pen Company	Chief Accountant	Employment Manager	1,700	**
Solar Aircraft Company	Employment Supervisor	Cost Accounting Supervisor, General Accounting Supervisor	2,000	25

* Titles as stated by the respondents

** Did not answer this question

TABLE II

DATA CONCERNING THE 22 IOWA INDUSTRIES NOT COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Industry	Title of Respondents*	Title of Persons Employing Accountants*	Number of Employees	Number of Accountants
Amana Refregeration, Inc.	Controller	Vice President	**	4
Cudahy Packing Company***				
Curtis Companies, Inc.	Personnel Manager	Accounting Department Heads	495	5
DeKalb Agricultural Association, Inc.	Personnel Manager	**	1,000	8
Dubuque Packing Company	Office Manager	**	3,200	6
E. I. du Pont de Nemours	**	**	1,200	**
Farley & Loetscher Manufacturing Company	Vice-President and Treasurer	**	1,000	2
Fisher Governor Company	Auditor	Treasurer	1,400	4
Fruehauf Trailer Company	Plant Controller	Plant Controller	300	2
Hinson Mfg. Co., The	**	Vice President and Treasurer	360	2
Iowa Manufacturing Company	Asst. Treasurer	Asst. Treasurer	**	**

TABLE II (continued)

Name of Industry	Title of Respondents*	Title of Persons Employing Accountants*	Number of Employees	Number of Accountants
Keokuk Electro-Metals Company	Assistant Vice President	**	**	**
Mallory Battery Company	Personnel Director	Controller	450	3
Monarch Foods	**	**	95-550	0
Oliver Corporation, The	Personnel Manager	Personnel Manager, Plant Comptroller	1,250	10
Penick & Ford, Ltd.	Personnel Manager	**	**	0
Quaker Oats Company	Employment Supervisor	Employment Supervisor	1,200	14
Sioux City Battery Company***				
United States Gypsum Company	Employment Supervisor	**	**	**
Vernon Company, The	Assistant Treasurer	**	**	**
Wilson & Company	Personnel Director	Personnel Director, Office Manager	2,600	10
Wincharger Corporation	Personnel Manager	**	**	**

* Titles as stated by the respondents

** Did not answer this question

*** No longer in business

Of the original 65 industries to whom questionnaires were sent, 56 industries returned them. This represented a return of approximately 86 per cent. Thirty-four of the respondents completed the questionnaire indicating they employ beginning accountants directly from college. The remaining 22 either do not employ any accountants, being branch plants with the accounting done elsewhere; or do not employ beginning accountants; or had not employed any beginning accountants for some time and thus did not feel qualified to complete accurately or comprehensively the remaining questions. It was discovered from the data supplied by the returned questionnaires that six of the selected industries no longer employ 500 persons and two of the selected industries are no longer in operation.

At first glance it might appear that the number of fully completed returns (34 out of 56) was rather small; nonetheless this figure could be misleading. The fact that 22 respondents indicated that their firms do not employ any beginning accountants and thus did not complete the questionnaire in full has significance to the accounting student with respect to the opportunities for accounting positions in these Iowa industries.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

An examination was made of the many definitions of an accountant in an effort to select one which would fit the actual duties performed by a majority of accountants.^{3, 4, 5} For the purpose of this study a

3. American Institute of Accountants. Duties of Junior and Senior Accountants, Supplement to CPA Handbook. The Institute, 1953.

composite definition is used in which an accountant is defined as one who does any or all of the following:

1. Supervises operation of an accounting department
2. Does budget accounting
3. Cost accounting
4. Balances books
5. Auditing
6. Prepares statements for administrative officers
7. Prepares Federal, State, and local tax returns
8. Interprets accounts and records for administrative officers
9. General accounting

He may also do the work of a junior accountant who, under supervision:

1. Verifies addition
2. Checks audits
3. Analyzes accounts
4. Prepares statements

Also, for the purposes of this study a "beginning accountant" is understood to mean a person who (1) in his college work studied accounting, and who received a degree, and (2) who had no previous experience in full time accounting work prior to his initial employment. The beginning accountant then, as defined for this study, is one who has just completed his college education and is now ready to take his place in the business world.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The data secured by means of the mailed questionnaire are subject to certain limitations. Perhaps the main limitation lies in the fact

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4. Department of Labor, United States Employment Service, Division of Occupational Analysis. Dictionary of Occupational Titles Vol. 1, 2d ed. Washington D. C., United States Government Printing Office, 1949.
 5. Eric L. Kohler. A Dictionary for Accountants, 2d ed. Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957.

that it was impossible to contact industries of every size and type which might employ beginning accountants. Obviously, unless every industry that employs beginning accountants is included, the results will be somewhat distorted. However, it was felt that the industries surveyed were representative enough to answer the questions asked in this study and to give a reliable cross section of opinions by employing executives in Iowa industry.

There are, of course, as is the case with all questionnaires, limitations resulting from the questionnaire itself. Though every effort was made to state questions clearly, there may be some reason to believe that slightly different interpretations were made of the questions by different respondents.

V. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The finding of a satisfactory solution to the problem of accounting education is sufficiently important to warrant its continuous study, examination, and re-examination. Such continuous appraisal is important even if it serves only to emphasize and to amplify the pronouncements of others and perhaps to expose for examination a slightly different facet of the problem.

There are many reasons for this continuous study. Greulack and Rignanese sum up these reasons concisely when they state:

The myriad of changes that have taken place in our economy in the last decade has placed a strain on our educational system in their attempt to keep pace. In addition to providing the potential accountant with basic fundamentals and principles, he has to be kept abreast of the most modern professional techniques, equipment available, and management practices, as well

as the impact of taxes on the economy and business methods.⁶

Education is perhaps one of the most productive activities going on within a democracy. With a close cooperation of industry and colleges, education for accountants can be greatly broadened and enhanced, bringing about a much fuller measure of success for all concerned.

The educator should be interested in serving the needs of both the student and the community. He should be eager to train the student to be a "professional man" in the true sense of that phrase. This implies more than mere technical proficiency and mechanical competence. It means training the student to be a whole man, so that he fits into his environment and is aware of his social and community responsibilities. However, the teacher cannot overlook the student's need for professional competence, a code of professional behavior, and the exercise of discretion in making evaluations based on sound judgment. This is the challenge to the college and the educator.

6. M. B. Greulack, and L. Rignanese. "Joining Forces in Educating the Accountant," N.A.A. Bulletin 39: 57-59; January, 1958.

CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

A high degree of interest and concern about the training of beginning accountants is evidenced by the large number of articles written and research studies made in this area. Much of the literature deals with employment practices of specific business firms as they pertain to beginning accountants with only limited attempts to relate this information to curriculum practices of colleges and universities. Very little information was found concerning the practices of specific firms in Iowa.

The research studies and articles summarized in the following pages do not represent an exhaustive list of all such literature pertaining to the problem under investigation. Nonetheless, it is felt that the literature summarized is representative of the various types of investigations made.

Templeton, in making a survey similar to this one for the purpose of determining the duties, and educational and personal requirements of junior accountants in Austin and Houston, Texas, secured data of importance to both curriculum planners and accounting students of that locale. He surveyed, by means of the interview, five business firms in Austin, and 12 business firms in Houston, Texas. His conclusions were:

1. Most supervisors feel that junior accountants are adequately trained for both their present and potential jobs, but that, as a rule, they have difficulty in expressing themselves and in maintaining the proper attitude toward work. Deficiencies were noted in report writing, letter writing, penmanship, spelling, arithmetic,

and public speaking. Further, supervisors would like for junior accountants to have a broader knowledge of history, economics, English grammar and composition, and literature that they might develop interests other than accounting.

2. Training and personality are the most important factors in employing junior accountants, but others which were listed by two or more supervisors were ambition, maturity, ability to get along with people, and personal appearance.

3. There were considerable differences of opinion concerning the importance of the accounting courses. However, most supervisors consider elementary accounting, intermediate accounting, advanced accounting, cost accounting, advanced cost accounting, income tax accounting, corporation accounting, accounting systems and procedures, and auditing either essential or important to the study of junior accountants. Most supervisors consider governmental and municipal accounting to be non-essential to the training of junior accountants.⁷

Holtman, while attending Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, conducted a survey of selected oil companies in Oklahoma to determine the requirements and practices in employment of accountants, accounting clerks, and record keepers. The investigator, in this study, surveyed 14 oil companies in Oklahoma to (1) determine whether the training given by schools has been satisfying the minimum requirements in these fields, (2) ascertain the minimum requirements specified for the beginning worker in these fields, and (3) secure occupational information for interested students. It was of interest to note that only two of the 14 surveyed oil companies employed beginning accountants.

Of the conclusions reached by Holtman, the following are pertinent to this study:

-
7. Logan Templeton, Jr. "Analysis of the Duties, Educational and Personal Requirements of Junior Accountants in Austin and Houston, Texas." (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Texas, 1955), p. 194.

1. Beginning accountants, accounting clerks, and record keepers are reported by 50 per cent or more of the personnel managers to be frequently deficient in the subject matter areas of grammar, punctuation, spelling, penmanship, and speech.

2. These employees need to develop their personal traits with special emphasis on the following: organization of duties, initiative, judgment, and the ability to follow instructions.

3. Beginning accountants, accounting clerks, and record keepers need additional training in composing business letters. The beginning employees have proved satisfactory in the performance of accounting duties.

4. The minimum education requirement for a new accountant is college graduation.

5. Employment tests are given by the majority of oil companies to applicants for positions as accounting clerks and record keepers. The abilities and traits most frequently tested by these employment tests are intelligence, clerical ability, personality, clerical aptitude, and typewriting.

6. Personal interviews, reference letters, college transcripts, and college contacts are other methods used in determining the abilities of applicants for positions as accountants, accounting clerks, and record keepers.⁸

In a study conducted by Null, an attempt was made to analyze and evaluate preparation for accounting as offered at the collegiate level in the state of Oklahoma. By means of interviews, data were obtained from 48 accounting teachers in 16 senior colleges and 13 junior colleges. Specifically, the investigation involved an analysis of the information obtained in the interviews and the appraisal of the program of accounting in the 29 colleges in Oklahoma in terms of criteria set forth by the

3. Ervan J. Holtman. "A Survey of Selected Oil Companies in Oklahoma to Determine Requirements and Practices in Employing Accountants, Accounting Clerks, and Record Keepers." (unpublished Master's thesis, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1950), p. 96.

American Accounting Association. The major portion of the data pertains to circumstances surrounding six essential elements: program structure, objectives, subject matter, instruction, evaluations, and the teacher.

Conclusions reached by Miss Null are as follows:

1. The program of preparation for accounting occupations offered in senior colleges includes general information and fundamental skills, basic information relative to business and economics, and specialized information and abilities in accounting.
2. Instruction in accounting is designed primarily to enable students to acquire proficiency in utilizing accounting principles, procedures, and practices, in solving problems of business as practicing accountants.
3. The purposes and emphases of instruction in accounting should include: acquainting students with acceptable practices and procedures, enabling students to acquire an understanding of the basic theory, and providing students with an opportunity to apply the practices and the theory of accounting in the solution of business problems.
4. Accounting classroom activities evolve from the study of the textbook subject matter with the lecture-discussion method of presentation being used most frequently. Instruction in the subject may be improved through greater use of carefully selected supplementary materials and teaching aids.
5. The teachers of accounting follow measurement and evaluation procedures which are in accord with the recommendations of the American Accounting Association.
6. In general, the teachers of accounting are well qualified and by means of added experience, continued work activities, and interest in literature and professional activities will become more effective in their instruction.⁹

John A. Cunningham conducted a study to discover to what extent the graduates of the School of Business Administration of North Texas

9. Elsie La Hassa Hull. "Accounting at the Collegiate Level." (unpublished Doctor's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1954), p. 173.

State College had been able to use the accounting courses taken while enrolled in the college. The graduates were asked to evaluate courses offered by the accounting department and to make qualifying suggestions for new courses, the elimination of courses, improvements in method of teaching, and to supply any other information which would improve the efficiency of the accounting department. Cunningham felt that this means of securing pertinent information was sorely neglected by many people doing educational research.

After having made an analysis of the work of the Department of Accounting, Cunningham arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The graduates of the department find from their application of the academic training received at North Texas State College that the only weakness in their basic training is the lack of a few specialized accounting courses.
2. Those graduated are adequately schooled in the basic fundamentals of accounting and business principles. This has been concluded from the fact that the accounting graduates have been so quickly employed. The average graduate secured employment after applying for only three and four-tenths positions.
3. The teaching profession and the business world feel that the graduates are qualified to satisfy the demands of these fields. This is concluded because no unemployment problem exists for these former students. They are either graduate students or are gainfully employed.
4. Laboratory instruction could serve to improve the teaching of the intermediate accounting course, cost accounting, auditing, and income tax accounting. A large number of those graduated suggested that these courses be supplemented with laboratory work. They felt that such aid would be of utmost importance to the aspiring student in grasping a more thorough understanding of principles involved.
5. A more realistic approach should be sought by the instructors in teaching accounting. Actual accounting problems of local business firms might be studied.

6. Accounting majors should have at least thirty-six hours of accounting to qualify for a degree in accounting. This should include twenty-seven required hours and nine hours of advanced electives.

7. The accounting major should be required to have an understanding of the following courses in related fields, which, according to the graduates, would be useful: Economics, Business Law, Business Correspondence, Business Mathematics, Business Machines, Statistics, Typing, Speech, Short Term Finance, Personnel Management, English, Industrial Management, Insurance, and Corporation Finance.¹⁰

Several studies have been made of practicing accountants' views of what should be studied by college students who expect to enter the various phases of accounting. An example of such a study is one made by Professor W. P. Carr of Loyola University, New Orleans. Professor Carr sent questionnaires to accounting firms and practitioners. The contents and format of the questionnaire were evolved from previous studies made by the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants and Mr. George J. Kalcik, CPA of Wisconsin. He listed a number of courses in accounting as well as in other areas and asked for an opinion as to the value or relative importance of each. He received replies from 331 firms of practitioners. He then weighed and combined the answers to produce a percentage rating for each course. One hundred would mean the highest rating as being essential. A low rating would indicate general agreement as to the course being of slight value or importance. His tabulations for importance in industrial and public accounting work of the various courses are as follows:

-
10. John A. Cunningham. "A Survey of Accounting Majors at North Texas State College from 1944 to 1950 to Evaluate Their Academic Training for the Vocational Positions Now Held." (unpublished Master's thesis, North Texas State College, 1950), p. 62.

<u>Courses in Business</u>	Percentage for	
	<u>Industrial</u>	<u>Public</u>
Accounting--Elementary and Intermediate	100	100
Advanced Accounting*	93	97
Elements of Cost Accounting*	96	96
Federal and State Income Taxes*	81	98
Business Law	80	95
Advanced Accounting Problems*	79	95
Analysis of Financial Control and Budgeting	86	82
Accounting Systems*	82	93
Auditing	76	99
Advanced Cost Accounting*	92	88
Corporation Finance*	76	83
Business Communications*	77	78
Statistical Methods*	79	75
General Economics	72	75
Money and Banking	66	73
Investments*	60	70
Economic Theory	65	68
Industrial Management*	82	63
Business Cycles*	61	63
Personnel Management*	70	61
Credit Management and Collections*	61	59
Institutional Accounting*	49	80
Public Finance	50	65
Governmental Accounting	46	75
Production Management*	73	53
Labor Problems*	68	52
Marketing Methods	62	52
Market Research*	53	45
Sales Management*	51	44
Principles of Advertising*	48	42

* These courses are usually offered as one semester in term.

<u>Other Courses</u>	Percentage for	
	<u>Industrial</u>	<u>Public</u>
Arithmetic	100	100
Business English	95	96
Report Writing	87	99
Mathematics of Finance	86	91
English Composition	87	92
Algebra	88	89
Ethics (professional)	79	91
Public Speaking	79	84

<u>Other Courses (continued)</u>	Percentage for	
	<u>Industrial</u>	<u>Public</u>
Principles of Insurance	72	73
Human Relations	69	69
Logic	65	68
Purchasing	67	60
American History	61	63
English Literature	61	63
Psychology	60	62
Geometry	57	59
International Trade	56	56
Geography--Economic	58	55
Philosophy	51	54
Training Program	51	53
Analytical Geometry	53	51
Trigonometry	49	49
Transportation	53	45
European History	45	46
Calculus	45	44
Spanish	37	37
Chemistry	39	36
Biology	35	36
German	32	31
French	32	30 11

That so many and such a variety of courses are considered significant for persons who are entering accounting indicates the nature of the problem of selecting the "ideal" course of study. Many areas are very important and many more are helpful. An accountant can use a broad and varied knowledge to good advantage. Yet time in college limits each student to taking only a small number of all the useful courses. Selection will never be easy, even with more time available.

The various accounting associations have been actively concerned with accounting education. Possibly the most active of these associations is the American Accounting Association whose interest has been

11. William P. Carr, CPA. "An Evaluation of Accounting Curriculum Subjects," Collegiate News and Views 6: 5-10; October 1952.

manifested in various projects and special committee activities undertaken by the Association, alone, and jointly with other groups such as the American Institute of Accountants.

One of the Association's special task committees in the area of education is the Committee of Standards of Accounting Instruction. This committee made a study of the undergraduate accounting curriculum on a nation-wide basis, which was reported in the January, 1956, Accounting Review.

A questionnaire study was used to determine the undergraduate courses taken by accounting majors. The questionnaire was sent to most of the colleges and universities in the country offering a major or concentration of study in accounting in the undergraduate program. Replies from 100 colleges and universities were used as the basis for the results. This sample was felt to be representative of all schools offering an accounting major or concentration, but not representative of all schools that offer accounting courses.

The committee found that the median requirement for the accounting major includes six hours of elementary accounting, six hours of intermediate accounting, and three hours of advanced accounting. Common requirements for other accounting courses are three hours of elementary cost accounting, three hours of auditing, and three hours of elementary income tax. The advanced cost accounting, governmental accounting, accounting systems, and CPA review courses are not generally required for an accounting major.

The committee also studied the other business and non-accounting course requirements of the accounting major. Six hours of English

composition, six hours of natural science, three hours of history, six hours of economics, four hours of other social sciences, and five hours of mathematics were generally accepted as standard requirements for an accounting major. According to median data, the accounting curricula generally includes three hours of corporation finance, three hours of money and banking, three hours of statistics, six hours of business law, and three hours of marketing.

The committee report stated that "Because of the great diversity in non-business course requirements, there is probably an appearance of more freedom of choice in the non-business area than actually exists in any individual school."¹²

Frank S. Endicott, Director of Placement, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, in an attempt to secure from a large number of employers specific answers to questions relating to the employment of college graduates in business, made a number of surveys. His findings which are of interest in this study were:

1. Specific personal characteristics considered essential by employers are:
 - a. The ability to get along with others (most frequently mentioned)
 - b. Qualities of honesty and loyalty
 - c. Human relationships, with special emphasis on those qualities necessary in meeting and working with people.
2. High marks, special courses, and personality, in that order, ranked highest on a scale rating relative importance of certain factors

12. Committee on Standards of Accounting Instruction. "Undergraduate Curricula," The Accounting Review 41: 36-41; January 1956.

relating to the employability of college graduates for accounting positions in 70 large companies.

3. Some of the adjustments which must be made after employment and for which the graduate is poorly prepared are classified under four main headings:

- a. Unrealistic attitude toward progress and what is required for advancement.
 - They expect too rapid advancement.
 - They fail to realize that they must contribute to the company by hard work and production.
 - They desire to avoid required routine tasks.
 - Unwillingness to start at or near the bottom.
- b. Lack of understanding of desirable relationships with fellow workers and supervisors.
 - Difficulty in getting along with others and working as a member of a group.
 - Lack of tolerance of those who did not go to college.
 - Underestimation of the value of experience.
 - Inability to take criticism and suggestions.
- c. Difficulty in making adjustment from college life to routine, detail, speed, and regular hours.
- d. Inability to apply theory in practical situations.

4. Employers have these suggestions for business educators:

Provide more and better vocational guidance, using interest, aptitude and other tests.

A further development and extension of the cooperative plan.

More emphasis on fundamentals, basic courses, and broad general education.

More lectures by experienced business leaders.

More carefully planned programs for each individual student in terms of his needs and his strong points.

More emphasis upon public speaking, letter writing and "utilitarian English."

More and closer contact between business and higher institutions.

Summer employment in industry for counselors and professors.

Determine more clearly the purposes of higher education in relation to business and industry.

Better balance between technical and general courses.¹³

In recent years there has been a great deal of emphasis placed on the value to the professional man of a broad general education. Business periodicals have many articles recommending that the man preparing to enter a profession have such an education, rather than a narrow, technical one. One criticism of accounting education is that many accounting teachers attempt to teach facts rather than to educate people.

Perry has stated the value of a liberal education in an article in the November, 1955, issue of The Journal of Accountancy.

Liberal education helps to place an accountant on an equal social and intellectual footing with other professional people--educators, lawyers, doctors, and engineers--as well as with top business executives. Social, cultural, and intellectual acceptability enhances the accountant's influence and usefulness, broadens his human relationships, and better fits him to understand and carry out the social aims of his profession.

The purpose of studying liberal arts is to acquire not a store of facts but rather ideas and attitudes and particularly a set of standards which will enable the educated man to recognize the first-rate in any field, including his own.¹⁴

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13. Frank S. Endicott. "The Guidance and Counseling of Business Education Students," Fifth Annual Delta Pi Epsilon Lecture, delivered in Chicago, Illinois, December 27, 1946. South-Western Publishing Co., March 1947.
 14. Donald P. Perry. "Training for the Profession," The Journal of Accountancy 100: 66-71; November 1955.

CHAPTER III

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS OF IOWA INDUSTRY

The objectives in this study were (1) to compile and analyze data that would be of value for those individuals in colleges and universities who are responsible for establishing the curriculum and guiding the training of accounting students, and (2) to provide employment information for the accounting student. In this chapter there is contained an analysis of the opinions expressed by the responding executives of the selected Iowa industries relative to the training of beginning accountants.

A questionnaire (see Appendix) was used as the means to procure the desired data. The questionnaire was developed to encompass three general types of data pertaining to the employment of beginning accountants. These were:

1. Educational requirements for beginning accountants,
2. Employment practices in employing beginning accountants,
3. Miscellaneous information which might be of interest to the accounting student.

From the original group of 65 selected industries, 56 returned the questionnaire. Of the 56 industries who returned the questionnaire, 34 indicated that they employ beginning accountants directly from college, as shown in Tables I and II, (pages 7-12,) and thus completed the questionnaire in full. Therefore, the replies of these 34 industries form the basis of this study.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Educational Background. In order to determine what general type of educational background was desired of beginning accountants, the respondents were asked to indicate if they preferred (1) a broad liberal arts background with some training in accounting, (2) a highly specialized training in accounting, or (3) a business administration background with some training in accounting. The majority of the respondents indicated that they prefer the educational background of the beginning accountant to be either a highly specialized training in accounting or a business administration background with some training in accounting, as shown in Table III.

TABLE III

TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND DESIRED OF BEGINNING
ACCOUNTANTS BY 34 IOWA INDUSTRIES

Type of Educational Background	Number of Respondents Indicating Preference*
Broad liberal arts background with some training in accounting	7
Highly specialized training in accounting with some liberal arts	12
Business administration background with some training in accounting	18
Other	3

* Six respondents indicated more than one type

Eighteen respondents, or 53 per cent, indicated they desired a beginning accountant to have a business administration background with some training in accounting. The majority of these 18 respondents thought that a beginning accountant with a business administration major would receive all the accounting training needed and yet have a sound business foundation which might be missed if he concentrated on accounting courses. The basic principles and theory of accounting were considered by the majority of these respondents to be enough technical training. Evidently, these 18 respondents believed that a beginning accountant should be able to learn any accounting system through experience. It was also felt by these respondents that too narrow a technical education might be a handicap to an individual in his later years as he progresses toward the upper echelons of management.

Twelve respondents, or 35 per cent, indicated they preferred a beginning accountant to have a highly specialized training in accounting with some liberal arts. There were several reasons expressed for this type of background being selected. The most frequently mentioned reason was that an individual with a limited amount of accounting training would not be able to handle some of the duties placed before him, such as manufacturing cost accounting and other advanced accounting areas, and therefore, high specialization was needed. It should be noted that several of the respondents who preferred a highly specialized accounting background for accountants expressed their belief in the value of other business courses and liberal arts courses in order to develop a well-rounded individual.

Seven respondents, or 21 per cent, indicated they would prefer a beginning accountant with a liberal arts background with some training in accounting. Six of these seven respondents checked both the liberal arts background and the business administration background, but did not indicate which of these two types was their first choice.

One respondent indicated he would prefer a combination of all three of these general types. Another indicated a combination of business administration and the highly specialized accounting training would be preferred. It is doubtful if these preferences could ever be fulfilled for time in college limits each student to the number of courses he may study.

Degree Requirement. A company rule requiring a college degree as the minimum educational requirement for a position is sometimes questioned by those individuals who have gained their knowledge by experience. The respondents were asked to state the minimum educational qualifications for employment as an accountant in their company. In Table IV is summarized the opinions of the respondents regarding the minimum educational qualifications required for accounting positions.

Of the 34 respondents that completed the questionnaire, 13 respondents, or 38 per cent, stated that they require a college degree for the beginning accountant. Six respondents, or 18 per cent, stated that they desire an individual with a college degree, but are at times obliged to choose from applicants who do not have degrees. From these two groups, 11 respondents indicated they would prefer the beginning accountant to have a major in accounting while eight indicated they would prefer a major in business administration with a minor in accounting.

TABLE IV
 MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR ACCOUNTING
 POSITIONS IN 33 IOWA INDUSTRIES

Educational Qualification	Number of Industries Indicating Preference
College Degree (Required)	13
College Degree (Desired, but not required)	6
Other (Business College, correspondence course, related experience, work towards the degree while employed)	14

Fourteen respondents, or 41 per cent, indicated that a college degree was not required. Some of these 14 respondents stated that they would employ a beginning accountant with a business college or correspondence course training in accounting.

Three respondents stated that with training and experience to compensate for college, such as clerical or bookkeeping training, a person could be employed as an accountant. One Des Moines controller stated that his company does not require a college degree because "With a university in the city offering academic training leading to degrees--the employee can complete his work toward a degree."

Accounting Courses. One of the basic purposes in this study was to obtain opinions concerning which accounting courses would be preferred in the training of prospective accountants. The questionnaire contained a list of 14 college accounting courses and the respondents were asked

to designate which of these 14 courses they preferred the beginning accountant to have studied. The courses and opinions of the respondents are shown in Table V.

TABLE V
ACCOUNTING COURSES RECOMMENDED FOR BEGINNING ACCOUNTANTS
BY 34 IOWA INDUSTRIES

Name of Course	Respondents Designating Need of Course	
	Number	Per Cent
Elementary Accounting	30	88
Intermediate Accounting	29	85
Elementary Cost Accounting	29	85
Advanced Cost Accounting	17	50
Auditing	19	56
Tax Accounting	7	21
Controllership	7	21
Accounting Systems	16	47
Accounting Theory	17	50
Governmental Accounting	2	6
Corporation Accounting	14	41
Punch Card Accounting	17	50
CPA Problems	5	15
Other* Budgeting and Forecasting	1	3

* Stated by one respondent as being needed

It is significant that only elementary and intermediate general accounting and elementary cost accounting were designated by the majority of respondents as being of primary importance to the beginning accountant. Elementary general accounting was designated by 88 per cent of the participating executives. It should be noted that the four executives who did not designate the elementary course, did designate advanced courses which would require the elementary course as a prerequisite. Intermediate general accounting and elementary cost accounting were both designated by 85 per cent of those responding.

Other technical accounting courses frequently checked were advanced cost accounting, auditing, accounting theory, and punch card accounting. These courses were checked by 50 per cent or more of the respondents of the study. Corporation accounting and the accounting systems course were checked by approximately 40 per cent. Evidently these technical courses would be sufficient to provide a solid accounting foundation for an individual planning to enter industrial accounting since courses such as tax accounting, controllership, and CPA problems were checked by only a few of the participants of this study.

Non-Accounting Courses. The study was not limited to the preferences of industries for technical accounting courses. The respondents were asked to check from a list of nine non-technical courses which they prefer the beginning accountant to have studied while in college. A provision was made for the respondents to list any course not specifically listed. The tabulated results to this question are shown in Table VI, page 36.

TABLE VI
 NON-ACCOUNTING COURSES RECOMMENDED FOR BEGINNING
 ACCOUNTANTS BY 34 IOWA INDUSTRIES

Name of Course	Respondents Designating Need of Course	
	Number	Per Cent
Economics	25	74
Business Law	27	79
Marketing	14	41
Basic Business Machines	14	41
Business Correspondence	22	65
Art	2	6
Science	7	21
Communications Skills	17	50
Mathematics	22	65
Other*		
Money and Banking	1	3
Foreign Exchange	1	3
Basic Business	1	3
Speech	2	6
Statistics	2	6

* Stated by respondents as being needed

The courses mentioned most frequently by the respondents of a non-accounting nature which they preferred their beginning accountants to have studied were business law, economics, business correspondence, mathematics, and communications skills. These courses were checked by more than 50 per cent of those participating in the study. Other courses such as marketing and business machines were checked by approximately 40 per cent. It is interesting to note that the respondents evidently felt that the ability to communicate in writing is highly important for the the beginning accountant to have as courses embodying this ability were checked by a majority. Art and science courses did not appear to be too important in the minds of many of these executives.

Adequacy of Technical Accounting Training. Thirty-one respondents, or 91 per cent, expressed the opinion that the accounting training of beginning accountants is adequate to meet the requirements of their initial duties. Two respondents who expressed the opinion that the beginning accountant has adequate training to meet the requirements of his initial duties, one a chief accountant and the other a controller, added a comment concerning the accounting training received even though it was not specifically asked for. The chief accountant stated,

We do not expect the schools to train an accountant in our specific problems. We look for minds developed with the tools of the trade (principles) and reasoning ability.

The controller stated further,

I would say however that the practical side--i.e. actually being done in every day routine--should have a heavier emphasis as opposed to theory. 'The way it is done by CPA firms and the way it is handled in the field' are often times quite different.

Only three respondents, or nine per cent, indicated they were not satisfied with the accounting training of the beginning accountant.

These weaknesses as stated were:

More emphasis in training should be on the interrelationships of all phases of business activity. The accountant is in one of the best positions to utilize this training.

Most beginning accountants find it difficult to connect practical applications with theory. School work is usually based on hand posted ledgers, journals, etc. which makes the new employee quite lost when working in a modern accounting set-up.

Prime weakness is inability to present in understandable form facts and figures peculiar to your business and for which he has had no school training. In other words, failure to develop original thoughts.

Adequacy of the Non-Technical training. When asked if, in their opinion, there are any weaknesses in the educational training of the beginning accountant, as differentiated from the technical accounting training, the replies were much different from those given to the previous question concerning the technical accounting training.

Forty-one per cent of the respondents felt there were non-technical weaknesses. When asked to name the weaknesses which had been noticed those most often mentioned were in the areas of the communications skills: speech, writing, English, grammar, spelling, and report writing. It is obvious that, in the minds of the respondents, this phase of the education of the prospective accountant should receive greater emphasis. Two respondents recommended that more emphasis be placed in the accountants' education along managerial and supervisory lines. Several listed more than one weakness and included such items as: more liberal arts,

optional courses designed to improve their enjoyment of life, human relations, and the ability to reason logically.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Adequacy of Supply of Beginning Accountants. The respondents were asked to state whether or not they have found the supply of college trained accountants adequate to fill their needs. According to the report of the task committee on Standards of Accounting Instruction, in 1954 there were half as many accounting majors graduating as in 1950.¹⁵ The industries who participated in this study stated that they have generally found an adequate supply of college trained beginning accountants.

Eighty-five per cent of the respondents representing Iowa industry stated that they have found the supply of college trained beginning accountants adequate to fill their needs. One respondent noted that his needs have been filled to date, but that finding the right individual sometimes requires time.

Fifteen per cent of the respondents indicated they do not find the supply of beginning accountants adequate to fill their needs. One respondent in this group, whose industry is located in a smaller community, stated that most graduates go to the larger cities or large corporations instead of the smaller towns and industries such as his own. Two respondents stated that booklets prepared by the Controllers Institute of America and the American Institute of Accountants concerning the

15. Committee on Standards of Accounting Instruction. "Undergraduate Curricula," The Accounting Review 31: 36-41; January, 1956.

broad career opportunities that stem from academic training in accounting should receive wider distribution and use which would be beneficial in stimulating interest in the accounting profession. They also indicated that industry itself should provide summer and part-time employment in accounting offices for the college accounting student.

Screening Devices Used to Determine the Qualifications of the Prospective Accountant. In order to ascertain what methods were used to screen the prospective accountant a list of the more common screening devices in use was provided, and the respondents were asked to indicate which of the various devices they employed. Table VII, page 41, is a summary of data pertaining to the screening methods used by the Iowa industries participating in this study.

All 34 of the respondents, 100 per cent, conduct personal interviews with the applicants for accounting positions. Therefore, the personal interview should be regarded as a basic step by any prospective accountant in securing a position.

Tests are given to the prospective accountant by 47 per cent of the respondents. Many different tests are given and cover the areas of general intelligence, aptitude, clerical, general interest, and mechanical knowledge and aptitudes. Two respondents stated that their testing is done by an outside consultant.

Only 21 per cent of the respondents stated they would be satisfied with a prospective accountant who had an average college grade-point. Eighteen respondents, or 53 per cent, indicated that they preferred an above average grade-point, while two respondents preferred a superior

TABLE VII
 SCREENING DEVICES USED IN DETERMINING ABILITIES OF APPLICANTS
 FOR THE POSITION OF ACCOUNTANT IN 34 IOWA INDUSTRIES

	Methods of Determining Abilities						
	Personal Interview	Employment Tests	College Transcripts	College References	Business References	Personal References	Employment Record
Number of Industries Reporting	34	16	31*	22	20	19	26

* Desired grade point: Average-7, Above Average-18, Superior-2, Combination of these-4

grade point. Two respondents indicated that either an average or above average grade-point was preferred, while two respondents indicated that they prefer either above average or superior. Two respondents did not answer this part of the question concerning the screening devices, while one respondent stated that the college record of an applicant was not used in any manner.

References were used as a screening device by 82 per cent of the participating industries. Twenty-two respondents, or 65 per cent, use college references; 59 per cent use business references; and 56 per cent use personal references. As is evidenced by the total number of industries desiring references, most of them require a combination of two or all three types. Six respondents did not answer this part of the question, which would seem to indicate that references are not required by these six industries.

Twenty-six industries, or 76 per cent, stated that previous employment records were used as a screening device in selecting the beginning accountant. The respondents were not asked to indicate the manner in which these employment records are used, but the fact that they are desired by a majority of the respondents would seem to indicate their importance.

The questionnaire contained a provision for the respondents to list any other screening devices used by them to determine the abilities of the applicants for the position of accountant. Methods other than the above which were listed by the respondents were the following: various telephone checks whenever possible, and a private investigation by a firm such as a retail credit company. One respondent stated that

he desires to know the applicant's background and home life, church, community interests, and the like.

College Grades. Ninety per cent of the respondents attached importance to the college grades of the prospective accountant. Ten per cent of the respondents attached no importance to college grades.

Extra-Curricular Activities. Much importance was also attached to the extra-curricular activities in which the prospective accountant may have participated while in college. Eighty-two per cent of the respondents consider extra-curricular activities to be important to the beginning accountant, while 18 per cent of the respondents attach no importance to extra-curricular activities.

Colleges and Universities from which Beginning Accountants are Obtained. The respondents were asked to name the colleges and universities from which the majority of their beginning accountants had received their education and why the graduates of these colleges and universities were selected. It was thought that these data might be of interest to the prospective accountant. As shown in Table VIII, page 44, there were several schools listed with only the University of Iowa and Drake University being listed by more than three of the respondents. The majority of respondents named more than one school. There were few specific reasons why these colleges and universities were named, although one respondent who named only the larger midwestern universities stated:

The technical exposure is thorough and extensive, and the individuals have learned to compete in a large open social and economic group. Generally we found they have more poise and self-confidence, dress better, and are more socially adjusted and mature.

TABLE VIII

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FROM WHICH BEGINNING ACCOUNTANTS
HAVE BEEN OBTAINED BY 34 IOWA INDUSTRIES

College or University	Number of Industries Designating This College or University
Augustana College	1
Central College	1
Drake University	11
Iowa State College	1
Iowa State Teachers College	2
Marquette University	2
Morningside College	1
Northwestern University	1
Purdue University	1
Simpson College	1
St. Ambrose College	2
University of Colorado	1
University of Illinois	3
University of Iowa	14
University of Kansas	1
University of Minnesota	3
University of Missouri	1
University of Nebraska	2
University of Wisconsin	3
Various Business Colleges	2

There were two general reasons why the graduates of the designated colleges and universities were employed. The most frequently mentioned was that these individuals generally lived in the area in which the industry was located, consequently they are employed near their friends and relatives and thus more inclined to continue working for a longer period of time and have less personal problems. The second most important reason mentioned by the respondents was that the individual is selected on his own merits and not the merits of the school he had attended. The majority of the respondents felt that all the schools mentioned have good accounting programs and seem to turn out well-qualified graduates.

Media Used in Locating Beginning Accountants. The questionnaire listed the five most common types of media which are used to locate a prospective accountant and the respondents were asked to indicate, in numerical order according to the order of frequency of use, which of the various types of media are used. In Table IX, page 46, is presented the various media used by the 34 participating Iowa industries in locating beginning accountants.

Thirty, or 88 per cent, of the participating industries indicated that they maintain a company personnel department which is used to locate beginning accountants. Forty-one per cent of the respondents reported that the company personnel department is the first media used, and 15 per cent reported the company personnel department is the second media used.

TABLE IX
 MEDIA USED IN LOCATING BEGINNING ACCOUNTANTS AS
 INDICATED BY 34 IOWA INDUSTRIES*

Media	First Media	Second Media	Third Media	Fourth Media	Fifth Media	Sixth Media	Did Not Indicate
Company Personnel Department	14	5	2	0	0	0	9
College Placement Bureau	8	7	4	0	0	0	8
State Employment Bureau	0	1	1	2	1	0	2
Private Employment Bureau	2	4	0	1	2	0	4
Newspaper Advertisement	1	2	4	1	1	1	4

* Listed according to frequency of use

Twenty-four per cent of the respondents reported that the college placement bureau is the most important media used in locating the beginning accountant, and 21 per cent reported the college placement bureau is the second media used.

State employment bureaus, private employment agencies, and newspaper advertisements are seldom used by the participants of this study as a primary media in locating beginning accountants.

Other types of media listed by the responding industries as being used to locate beginning accountants included the following: employment agencies of technical societies such as the National Association of Accountants and the National Association of Cost Accountants, direct contact with a school's accounting department head, public accounting firms, and recommendations of present employees.

Minimum and Maximum Employment Age Required of Beginning Accountants. Twenty, or 59 per cent, of the industries participating in this study have no minimum age requirement for employment of beginning accountants and 19, or 56 per cent, of the participating industries have no maximum age requirement for employment of beginning accountants. Twelve respondents, or 35 per cent, do have some type of an employment policy regarding the age limits of a beginning accountant, although several of the respondents who listed an age limit stated that the ages listed were preferred and not a set policy. The minimum age requirement varied from 18 years to 22 years. The maximum age requirement varied from 26 years to 45 years. One respondent stated that he preferred that the military obligation of the applicant be fulfilled.

Preference Between Male and Female Applicants. Twenty-six respondents, or 76 per cent, stated they do have a preference between male and female accounting applicants, even if they are equally trained. All 26 of these respondents stated they prefer male accountants. There were two primary reasons given for selecting a male accountant. These were: (1) the male accountant has a greater supervisory potential as he may be promoted to the limits of his abilities; and (2) the turnover possibilities are too high among females. Other reasons listed by the respondents were that the accountant must sometimes go into the plant to gather data and this can be better handled by a male; males show more initiative and desire for advancement; and males are easier to transfer geographically.

Twenty-four per cent of the respondents stated they had no preference between male and female accountants.

Marital Status Preferred for Beginning Accountants. It was clearly indicated that the marital status of the beginning accountant makes little difference to the respondents of this study. Ninety per cent of the respondents indicated that they have no preference between a married applicant and one who is not married. One respondent qualified his statement by adding that if the applicant is a male then there is no preference, but if the applicant is a female then it is desirable that she be married. Nine per cent of the respondents stated that they prefer the applicant to be married regardless of sex.

Approximate Number of Beginning Accountants Employed Each Year. It was found that a question regarding the approximate number of

beginning accountants employed each year was difficult for the respondents to answer specifically. Several respondents stated that the number of beginning accountants employed in a year depends upon the work load and upon the candidates available which will vary from year to year. The majority of the respondents stated that they will normally employ either one or two beginning accountants per year. Other replies ranged to a high of approximately 15 beginning accountants being employed per year as is the case with one respondent. One respondent stated that no beginning accountants had been employed in the past two years. It should be realized there are many factors influencing the employment of beginning accountants.

General Monthly Salary Paid to Beginning Accountants. The respondents were asked to state the monthly salary currently being paid to their beginning accountants. As is shown in Table X, page 50, there was a range from a low of \$175 per month to a high of \$450 per month, although it is questionable that the low figure of \$175 was being paid to a college trained accountant. The salary varied from \$25 to \$125 per month within one industry depending upon the training and qualifications of the applicant. Beginning accountants were paid a median salary range of from \$376 per month to \$400 per month with the training and qualifications of the applicant being the deciding factors. Generally, it appeared that the larger industries pay the higher salaries.

TABLE X
 GENERAL MONTHLY SALARY PAID TO BEGINNING
 ACCOUNTANTS BY 33 IOWA INDUSTRIES

General Salary Paid	Number of Respondents Indicating*
\$175-\$200	1
\$201-\$225	0
\$226-\$250	1
\$251-\$275	0
\$276-\$300	1
\$301-\$325	1
\$326-\$350	4
\$351-\$375	3
\$376-\$400	8
\$401-\$425	3
\$426-\$450	7
Varies (Based on training and qualifications)	4

* Indicated by the highest figure listed by the respondents

Median Salary Paid \$376-\$400

Mean Salary Paid \$383.62

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Personality Difficulties Found in Beginning Accountants. In Table XI is summarized the opinions of the respondents of this study with respect to the various personality difficulties found in beginning accountants.

TABLE XI

PERSONALITY DIFFICULTIES FOUND IN BEGINNING ACCOUNTANTS

AS NOTED BY 26 IOWA EXECUTIVES

Personality Difficulty	Number of Respondents Indicating Difficulty
Inability to get along with others	6
Lack of initiative	5
Inability to mature properly	4
Because they are college graduates they know everything	3
Dislike of routine clerical duties	2
Learning only one job and stopping	1
Lack of enthusiasm	1
Lack of imagination	1
Tendency to place too much stress on security	1
Introverted	1
Tend to be too professional	1

The respondents listed a total of 11 different personality difficulties they have observed in their beginning accountants. The inability to get along with others was listed by 18 per cent of the respondents and 15 per cent listed a lack of initiative. Other personality difficulties which were noticed by the respondents in beginning accountants were an inability to mature properly and lack of responsibility. Furthermore, beginning accountants sometimes think that just because they are college graduates they know how things should be done, and the beginning accountant fresh from college does not like to do the routine clerical duties. More than one personality difficulty was listed by several respondents. One respondent stated that

Lack of initiative and curiosity especially in cost accounting which is very important--few of them really dig to find out the truth first--they must be prompted. Emphasis on 'management' in education has not also taught the necessity of 'winning your spurs' first.

Another respondent stated:

The beginner sometimes feels that because accounting in practice varies considerable from the theory that they have wasted their education, or that they are merely clerks and not accountants. Also, in the last few years, most young people feel that they should become Vice President of a concern in a relatively short time.

Twenty-four per cent of the participating executives stated they have observed no personality difficulties in their beginning accountants. Several respondents added that they are careful in their initial selection and, therefore, have not employed an individual with any personality difficulties.

Favorable Personality Factors Noticed in Beginning Accountants.

The favorable personality factors noticed in beginning accountants are

summarized in Table XII, page 54. It is of interest to note that the favorable personality factors listed by the respondents involve the positive side of the factors which were listed as being personality difficulties.

Twenty-one per cent of the participating executives listed as a favorable personality factor the ability to get along with others. Eighteen per cent stated that the beginning accountants are inquisitive. Other favorable personality factors listed are initiative, personality, and the interest of the beginning accountant in the overall work of the company. One respondent made the following list of favorable personality factors which pleased him:

Interest in work, asking sensible questions, broadening self study, good human relations, accuracy, good attendance, and logical reasoning ability.

Five respondents stated they had observed no specific favorable personality factors in their beginning accountants.

For What Reasons Do Beginning Accountants Fail? It was thought that it would be advantageous to the prospective accountant to have the individuals from the major Iowa industries who actually employ and discharge the majority of beginning accountants state their reasons why their beginning accountants fail. The reasons were many, as summarized in Table XIII, page 55, but three reasons were stated more frequently than others.

Twenty-four per cent of the respondents stated that the lack of initiative and the lack of the ability to "hook up" their knowledge with the problem at hand were reasons for the failure of beginning accountants.

TABLE XII
 FAVORABLE PERSONALITY FACTORS NOTICED IN BEGINNING
 ACCOUNTANTS AS NOTED BY 29 IOWA EXECUTIVES

Favorable Factor	Number of Respondents Indicating Factor
Ability to get along with others	7
Inquisitive	6
Initiative	4
Personality	4
Interest in the overall work of the company	3
Maturity	1
Concentration and drive	1
Proud of their training--high regard of school and professors	1
Proper office behavior--work and keep mouth shut	1
Ability to sell the staff services to the rest of the organization	1
Alertness	1
Extrovert	1
Ability to express themselves	1
Sincerity	1
Clear idea of goals	1
Integrity	1
High moral standard	1
Loyalty	1

TABLE XIII
 REASONS WHY BEGINNING ACCOUNTANTS FAIL
 AS NOTED BY 21 IOWA EXECUTIVES

Reasons For Failure	Number of Respondents Indicating Reason
Lack of initiative	8
Lack of ability to "hook up" their knowledge with the problem at hand	8
Lack of ability to get along with people	6
Not inquisitive enough about the work and its relation to the rest of the office	4
Attitude toward company	3
Lack of basic accounting knowledge	2
Too complaisant with first answer	1
Not satisfied with rate of progress	1
Inability to grasp industrial accounting problems	1
Unable to assume responsibility	1
Inability to develop full potential to self and company	1
Picked the wrong profession	1
Unfamiliar attitude with the business structure as a whole	1
Lack of general ability	1

The lack of ability to get along with other people was listed by 18 per cent of the respondents.

Reasons stated by other respondents were that the beginning accountant was not inquisitive enough about the work and its relation to the rest of the office, a poor attitude toward the company, and a lack of basic accounting knowledge.

Thirty-eight per cent of the respondents either did not feel qualified or for some other reason did not reply to this question.

For What Reasons Do Beginning Accountants Succeed? In the interest of the prospective accountant the responding executives were asked to state the reasons why their beginning accountants had succeeded. It was found that the respondents were in more agreement on the reasons for the success of a beginning accountant, although eight different reasons were listed by the 28 respondents who answered this question as is summarized in Table XIV, page 57.

Thirty-two per cent of the respondents stated that a good basic accounting foundation plus the application of the knowledge was the reason for the success of their accountants who had been employed by them as a beginning accountant. The ability to get along with other people was listed by 29 per cent, initiative by 24 per cent, and the ability to relate their job to the organization by 21 per cent.

Other reasons for the success of beginning accountants which have been observed by the responding Iowa executives were that they (beginning accountants) are not afraid of work, have intellectual curiosity, are accurate, and are willing to accept responsibilities and changes.

TABLE XIV
 REASONS FOR SUCCESS OF BEGINNING ACCOUNTANTS
 AS NOTED BY 28 IOWA EXECUTIVES

Reason For Success	Number of Respondents Indicating Reason*
A good basic accounting foundation plus the application of this knowledge	11
Ability to get along with other people	10
Initiative	8
Ability to relate duties to the whole organization	7
Not afraid of work	5
Intellecual curiosity	4
Accuracy	3
Willingness to accept responsibilities and changes	2

* Several check more than one

One respondent stated:

Beginning accountants succeed when they (a) make every experience contribute to their background, (b) concentrate on reasons for performing functions, as well as performing them well, (c) extend themselves to understand interrelation of all company departments and appreciate the operating problems of others.

Employment Factors Considered When Employing Beginning Accountants.

The respondents were asked to list the most important factors which they consider when employing beginning accountants. There were 26 different

factors which were reported to be important, each being ranked first, second, third, or fourth most important by at least one respondent, as shown in Table XV, pages 59 and 60.

Technical ability and personality were the factors mentioned most frequently, with technical ability ranked either first, second, third, or fourth by 71 per cent of the respondents. Personality was ranked either first, second, third, or fourth most important by 56 per cent of the respondents.

One respondent stated:

Among the important criteria on which selections are based are scholarship, the ability to express one's self, appearance, personality, and a diversity of interests as indicated by extra-curricular activities. Selections are based on a composite of the above factors with no one factor being considered most important.

Four respondents did not express their opinion concerning the most important employment factors; therefore, these are the opinions of only 30 of the respondents.

Suggestions for Curriculum Improvement as Offered by the Respondents. The respondents were asked to state any specific recommendations they might have for the improvement of the present college accounting curriculum. Fifty-nine per cent of the respondents made specific recommendations.

Specific suggestions as stated by the respondents were the following:

More emphasis on communications skills so that a graduate can express himself verbally and in writing.

TABLE XV

EMPLOYMENT FACTORS CONSIDERED WHEN EMPLOYING BEGINNING
ACCOUNTANTS AS STATED BY 30 IOWA EXECUTIVES

Employment Factor	Number of Respondents Who Rated the Factors			
	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Technical ability or accounting knowledge	9	9	5	1
Personality	9	7	2	1
Ability to get along with others	1	2	1	0
Attitude	2	0	0	0
Looks and appearance	1	1	4	1
A liking for figure work	1	0	0	0
Integrity	1	0	0	0
General alertness	1	0	1	0
Goals in life	1	0	0	1
Willingness to learn	1	0	1	0
Response during interview	1	0	1	0
Mental ability	2	0	0	0
Background	1	0	1	2

TABLE XV (continued)

Employment Factor	Number of Respondents Who Rated the Factors			
	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Related courses	0	1	0	1
Accuracy and neatness	0	2	0	0
Previous employment	0	1	2	0
Interest	0	1	1	1
Initiative	0	1	0	2
Interest in career	0	1	2	0
Writing and speaking abilities	0	1	0	1
Satisfactory references	0	0	1	1
Analytical mind	0	0	1	0
Outside interests	0	0	1	2
Health	0	0	1	0
Appreciation of importance of group effort	0	0	1	0
Maturity	0	0	0	2

Most schools provide the individual courses but do not tie them into a picture of the whole business enterprise. Very few graduates have learned that accounting not only provides records but also provides information for management so they are informed to manage. Also, the tie-in of economics, business law, etc. with accounting.

Would suggest that several additional semesters be added to accounting courses to aid in the presentation of accounting reports. The accounting student must be taught how to bring out the story in the figures in a form which can be readily understood by the person not trained in this field. Most accountants are just good mechanics, their work is mathematically correct but they don't specialize in telling the real story of what is happening by a thorough analysis of all phases of business operations. They should be trained to point out strength and weaknesses.

- (a) Expand internship program in industrial accounting.
- (b) Give equal emphasis to industrial accounting and public accounting.
- (c) Teach not only techniques of accounting, but also the management use of accounting.
- (d) Elevate the profession by teaching 'accounting' to other college majors, not principles of 'bookkeeping'--They'll probably never prepare a worksheet analysis, but, if successful, they'll use and interpret them.
- (e) Teach salesmanship to the accountant--his product has been undersold for centuries.

A program of classroom and field work. Perhaps the summer vacation months could be utilized in field training. Student would be paid for time worked and also receive college credits. Would recommend this for junior and senior years.

Schools should offer more courses which explain the principles and uses of punched card accounting or electronic data processing machines as they are related to auditing, systems, and general accounting.

The majority of the suggestions could be placed into three main categories. These are (1) more emphasis on communications skills, including report writing, public speaking, and English, (2) a better understanding of current business and accounting problems which could be gained through a seminar-type course and which would help stimulate the accounting student in relating his technical training to realistic on-the-job application, and (3) more emphasis on machine accounting.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were two main purposes of this study. The first was to study the educational and personal characteristics required for initial employment of accountants in a selected group of Iowa industries. The second purpose was to provide information concerning employment practices and trends that might be of interest to an accounting student.

Data were collected through the use of a questionnaire response from 34 major industries in Iowa which employ beginning accountants directly from college. Data obtained from these industries were presented in Chapter III.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study are summarized as answers to the specific questions that are listed in the statement of the problem in Chapter I.

Question 1. Does the instruction and training given by the Iowa colleges and universities adequately prepare students to enter employment as beginning accountants in Iowa industries?

Findings. The majority of the respondents reported that the instruction and training given by the Iowa colleges and universities is adequate to prepare students to enter employment as beginning accountants in Iowa industries.

However, beginning accountants are sometimes deficient in the following areas: communications skills, ability to relate accounting

knowledge to on-the-job application, and machine accounting. Also, the data indicated that perhaps more emphasis should be placed on the development of personality traits. Personality traits in which special emphasis is needed by some beginning accountants are: ability to get along with others, initiative, and intellectual curiosity.

Question 2. What do supervising accountants and personnel managers consider to be desirable training qualifications for beginning accountants?

Findings. Either of two major types of training qualifications are acceptable for a position as a beginning accountant.

1. A business administration background with the basic principles and theory of accounting.
2. A highly specialized training in accounting with some training in the liberal arts.

A college or university degree is not required in all of the participating industries, although, it is considered desirable by the majority of them.

Question 3. What suggestions do the accounting supervisors and personnel managers of Iowa's major industries have for the improvement of present accounting curriculums?

Findings. There are three phases of the present accounting curriculum which the majority of respondents felt needed improvement.

These are:

1. More emphasis on communications skills, including report writing, public speaking, and English.

2. A better understanding of the relationships between the knowledge learned in the classroom and the application of this knowledge on-the-job.
3. A greater emphasis on machine accounting.

Question 4. What are the employment possibilities and requirements, other than educational, for students graduating as prospective accountants?

Findings. The industries participating in this study will normally employ from one to fifteen beginning accountants per year, depending upon the work load and the candidates available.

The industries surveyed reported that a male applicant will find few restrictions in regard to age or marital status when applying for an accounting position. Few industries will employ a female beginning accountant.

Question 5. What additional occupational information for accounting students might be of use to them which is not included in the foregoing?

Findings. To secure a position as an accountant, a prospective accountant should apply through the personnel department of the industry of his choice. The company personnel department is the most important media used in locating a beginning accountant.

The salary received by the beginning accountant will vary from one company to another and even within a company, depending upon the qualifications of the applicant. Beginning accountants, at this time, will generally receive a salary ranging from \$325 to \$450 per month.

The number of companies placing importance upon the participation in extra-curricular activities and the achievement in college courses is very great and the prospective accountant should consider both of these elements as being important in preparing for his future position.

CONCLUSIONS

The data used as the basis of this study were obtained from 34 Iowa industries that employ beginning accountants directly from college. The conclusions reached on the basis of these data pertain specifically to these participating industries. However, there is some reason to believe that these conclusions may generally be applicable to the majority of Iowa industries that employ beginning accountants directly from college. Therefore, on the basis of the data gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in the study, it is believed that the following conclusions are justified:

1. To be a successful accountant, one should acquire a thorough knowledge of accounting and related business subjects. The prospective accountant should have courses in elementary general accounting, intermediate general accounting, elementary cost accounting, advanced cost accounting, and, if possible, punched card accounting to acquire the minimum technical accounting knowledge necessary to insure initial employment and success on-the-job. In addition to the above courses, it is recommended that the prospective accountant acquire a knowledge of business law, the basic business machines, and business correspondence.

2. The beginning accountant should possess a well-rounded education. Knowledge of business and accounting alone will not suffice. He should have an education that will enable him to have a variety of interests other than his work. Therefore, increased emphasis should be placed upon such areas as English grammar and composition, literature, economics, mathematics, report writing, public speaking, and other areas of liberal arts.

3. The participating industries indicated that they feel that a prospective accountant should strive to develop such personal traits as the ability to get along with others, inquisitiveness, initiative, and maturity. Upon graduation, he cannot reasonably expect to be given heavy responsibilities and rapid promotions, as these opportunities will come only after the individual has displayed a sincere interest in the work and a genuine concern for the affairs of the business.

4. Beginning accountants are adequately trained for their initial duties, but many will have deficiencies in the various communications skills, the ability to relate accounting knowledge to on-the-job application, machine accounting, and various personal traits. The beginning accountant should have a sound business background, a knowledge of economics, mathematics, English grammar and composition, and other areas of liberal arts.

5. Technical ability and personality are the most important employment factors considered when determining the qualifications of a prospective accountant.

6. A college degree is desired, but not required. Business college training, a correspondence course in accounting, or related work experience may compensate for the lack of a degree.

7. The prospective accountant should strive to earn the highest grades possible and participate in as many extra-curricular activities as possible while in college.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Accounting students should be oriented about the opportunities and responsibilities of the accounting profession before they choose this profession as a career. They should know about such things as the personality traits that are expected, the educational training desired, and the employment possibilities available to them.

2. It is highly recommended that the method of instruction in the technical accounting courses be re-evaluated to determine the possibility of providing more practical information as opposed to theory. This should enable the beginning accountant readily to transfer and apply the classroom knowledge he has learned to a working situation.

3. The accounting student needs to have more training in the communications skills. As a rule, the beginning accountant may have trouble in communicating both orally and in writing. Requiring more courses in this area perhaps might correct this.

4. The colleges and universities are not, with exceptions, teaching the use of punched card accounting and other electronic systems as rapidly as industry is putting this equipment into use. This phase

of accounting should receive greater attention and emphasis in the technical training of the prospective accountant.

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APPENDIX

**Practices and Points of View With Respect to the
Employment of Beginning Accountants**

Name of firm: _____

Approximate number of employees: _____

Number of accountants employed: _____

(For the purposes of this checklist, an accountant may be defined as one who does any or all of the following: Supervises operation of an accounting department, does budget accounting, cost accounting, balances books, prepares statements for administrative officers, does auditing, prepares Federal, State, or local tax returns, interprets accounts and records for administrative officers, and general accounting. He may also do the work of a junior accountant who, under supervision, verifies addition, checks audits, analyzes accounts, and prepares statements.)

Name of respondent: _____

Position of respondent: _____

Position of person (or persons) actually employing beginning accountants:

Note: All information asked for in this checklist will be kept in strict confidence.

If you would like a summary of the results of this checklist please indicate:

Yes () No ()

Do you employ accountants immediately out of college with no previous accounting experience?

Yes () No ()

Note: If "No," there will be no need for you to complete the rest of the checklist before returning it, as, for the purpose of this study we are interested in persons who, when they were employed by their present employer as an accountant, had no previous experience in full time accounting work. Please return the checklist even if your answer was "No," for the answer to this question is an important part of this study.

Educational Requirements

1. What type of educational background do you prefer your beginning accountants to have?

- a. Broad liberal arts background with some training in accounting ()
- b. Highly specialized training in accounting with some liberal arts ()
- c. Business administration background with some training in accounting ()
- d. Other (Please list) ()

Please state in a few sentences why you answered as you did.

2. Do you require your beginning accountants to have a college degree?

Yes () No ()

If "Yes," please check your preference of one of the following:

- a. Major in Accounting ()
- b. Major in Business Administration, minor in Accounting ()
- c. College degree, no special major ()
- d. Other (Please list) ()

If "No," please list what educational requirement is necessary:

3. What college accounting courses do you prefer a beginning accountant to have had? (Without specializing in any one specific area.)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|
| a. Elementary Accounting | () | i. Governmental Accounting | () |
| b. Intermediate Accounting | () | j. Corporation Accounting | () |
| c. Cost Accounting | | k. Punched Card Accounting | () |
| Elementary | () | l. C.P.A. Problems | () |
| Advanced | () | m. Other (Please list) | () |
| d. Auditing | () | | |
| e. Tax | () | | |
| f. Comptrollership | () | | |
| g. Accounting Systems | () | | |
| h. Accounting Theory | () | | |

4. What special courses do you prefer your accountants to have other than accounting?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| a. Economics | () | h. Communications skills | () |
| b. Business Law | () | i. Mathematics | () |
| c. Marketing | () | j. Other (Please list) | () |
| d. Basic Business Machines | () | | |
| e. Business Correspondence | () | | |
| f. Art | () | | |
| g. Science | () | | |

5. In your opinion, is the specialized accounting training of beginning accountants adequate to meet the requirements of their initial duties?

Yes () No ()

If "No," please list the weaknesses you have noticed.

6. In your opinion, are there any weaknesses in the educational training of your beginning accountants, as differentiated from the technical training?

Yes () No ()

If "Yes," please list the weaknesses you have noticed.

7. In employing beginning accountants, do you attach any importance to their college grades?

Yes () No ()

8. In employing beginning accountants, do you attach any importance to their extra-curricular activities?

Yes () No ()

9. From what colleges or universities do you obtain the majority of your beginning accountants?

Please list the reasons you have for selecting graduates from these colleges or universities.

Employment Practices

1. Have you found the supply of college trained accountants adequate to fill your needs?

Yes () No ()

If "No," what suggestions do you have to remedy this situation?

2. What screening devices are used by your company?

a. Interview ()

b. Test(s) ()

Please list name and type used.

c. College record: If college record is used, what grade point do you prefer? Average ()

Above average ()

Superior ()

d. References College ()

Business ()

Personal ()

e. Previous employment records ()

f. Other (Please list) ()

3. Which of the following media do you use in locating prospective accountants? (Please indicate in the order of frequency in which the agencies are used: 1 most frequent, 2 next, and the like.)

- a. Company Personnel Department ()
- b. College Placement Bureaus ()
- c. State Employment Bureaus ()
- d. Private Employment Agencies ()
- e. Newspaper Advertisements ()
- f. Other (Please list) ()

4. Does your company have any preference between male and female applicants, if trained equally?

Yes () No () Male () Female ()

If "Yes," please indicate why you have a preference.

5. Does your company prefer beginning accountants to be married?

Yes () No () No Preference ()

6. Does your company have any employment policy regarding minimum and/or maximum age of beginning accountants?

Yes () No ()

If "Yes," please list Minimum age (if any): _____

Maximum age (if any): _____

7. What is the approximate number of new accountants employed each year?

8. General monthly salary paid to beginning accountants? _____

Miscellaneous Information

1. What personality difficulties (if any) such as initiative, getting along with others, and the like, have you found in your beginning accountants?

2. What personality factors have you noted that pleased you particularly?

3. For what reasons do your beginning accountants fail? (Please list in the order of frequency.)

4. For what reasons do your beginning accountants succeed? (Please list in the order of frequency.)

5. What factors do you consider most important, when employing beginning accountants? (Please list in order of importance.)

6. Do you have any suggestions, based upon your employing experiences, for the improvement of the present college accounting curriculum?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

November 15, 1957

Personnel Manager
John Deere Dubuque Tractor Works
Dubuque, Iowa

Dear Sir:

As an executive in charge of the task of supplying your company with the best possible work force, you are fully aware of the importance of this job. In any given field, all companies have the same chance at buying materials, overhead is about the same, most products in the same field even have the same general appearance. But what about the people who produce the product? In the end it is the people employed by the company who are the determining factor as to how good your product will be and therefore determine how it will sell. Will you help us to improve the caliber of one group of employees.

Your cooperation is being solicited in a project which I believe will be of interest to you. Specifically, this project is an attempt to discover the employment practices and procedures for beginning accountants in selected industries in the State of Iowa. After these data have been accumulated and tabulated it is hoped that personnel managers in these businesses will have a clearer picture of the employment situation as far as accountants are concerned.

We need your assistance in this study, and would greatly appreciate your cooperation so that we can obtain a complete picture for the entire state of Iowa. Your honest and frank statements will be of the most value in this investigation.

Supervisors in the accounting department are many times called in to help with the selection of a beginning accountant. It is hoped, in such a case, that the supervisors will be called in to assist you in answering the questions asked in the checklist. If you, as personnel manager, have little to do with the hiring of beginning accountants, please forward the checklist to the person who does hire beginning accountants. In the event there is more than one supervisor in this category, please use your own discretion as to whom you select.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Very truly yours,

Leonard Bennett
Graduate Assistant
Coordinator of Research

LB:dd
Enclosure

December 11, 1957

Personnel Manager
John Deere Dubuque Tractor Works
Dubuque, Iowa

Dear Sir:

Controllers, Accounting Department Supervisors, and Personnel Managers have written me good news about my study "Practices and Points of View With Respect to the Employment of Beginning Accountants."

In less than three weeks I have received correspondence from 55 per cent of the industries selected to take part in this study. Ninety per cent of this group have requested a summary of the findings of the study. This interest in the study has been more than gratifying.

Your company is one of the sixty-five companies in Iowa being asked to take part in this study; however, up to this time I have not received your answer. The interest shown by the executives of the accounting departments leads me to believe your company would also be interested in taking part in this study. Therefore, I am enclosing another checklist in the event you may have mislaid the original sent to you. For the small amount of your time needed to complete the checklist, it would prove very beneficial.

You will be able to compare your companies practices and points of view with respect to the employment of beginning accountants with other companies in Iowa by requesting a summary of the results of this study.

If you, as personnel manager, have little or nothing to do with the hiring of beginning accountants, please forward the checklist to the person who does hire beginning accountants for your company.

A stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning the checklist. Your cooperation is helping me obtain this information will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Leonard Bennett
Graduate Assistant
Coordinator of Research

LB:jd
Enclosure

January 9, 1958

Personnel Manager
John Deere Dubuque Tractor Works
Dubuque, Iowa

Dear Sir:

On November 15, 1957, a checklist "Practices and Points of View With Respect to the Employment of Beginning Accountants" was mailed to you with the request that it be completed and returned to this office. On December 11, 1957, your reply had not been received so a second checklist was mailed to you in the event the initial checklist had been misplaced. As of today, I still have not had the good fortune to receive your opinions on this important subject.

Your company is one of only a few of the original sixty-five selected companies asked to participate in this study that has not, as yet, returned the checklist. The results have been most encouraging and several new ideas on curriculum planning and counseling future accountants have appeared. It is only through studies such as this that the educational training of your future accountants can be improved.

This checklist was prepared with the assistance of Mr. Walter Cochran, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer of the John Deere Waterloo Tractor Works, and Mr. Walter Obele, Personnel Manager of the Rath Packing Company of Waterloo. I have been employed as an accountant at Collins Radio Company of Cedar Rapids. An effort was made to keep the checklist brief and relevant to the purpose of the study so that it would take a minimum of your time and still provide the maximum of information.

How do your thoughts on this subject coincide with the rest of the major industries in Iowa? The only way to really find out is to participate in this study. Don't leave it to the "other" guy.

"Please" and "Thank You."

Very truly yours,

Leonard Bennett
Graduate Assistant
Coordinator of Research

LB:bb