

Running Head: INTERVIEW OUTCOMES AND DOOR-IN-THE-FACE TECHNIQUE

Can interview outcomes be influenced by door-in-the-face technique?

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Abstract

A variety of compliance techniques have been used throughout history. This paper will focus on the potential relationship between door-in-the-face (DITF) and employment interviews. Past research has shown that DITF is most effective in prosocial or helping situations. Given that offering employment can be viewed as a prosocial behavior, it is hypothesized that DITF will play a role in interview decisions. Therefore, three studies will be conducted. The first will focus on showing the relationship between DITF and employment interview outcomes. The remaining two studies will aim to identify methods for reducing DITF's effectiveness. One proposed method is the structured interview. Structured interviews have been shown to reduce interviewer bias when rating an interviewee. This interview technique may not completely reduce DITF's effects, however. Therefore, a third study is proposed to examine whether being informed about the technique will aid against falling prey to DITF. The information derived from these studies could have tremendous implications not only for ensuring fair hiring techniques, but also for training and workplace safety.

Can interview outcomes be influenced by door-in-the-face technique?

Throughout the years, people have used a variety of compliance techniques to guarantee they obtain specific results. Such techniques include foot-in-the-door, door-in-the-face, low-ball compliance, and group pressure. The use of these techniques, however, has resulted in both positive and negative consequences. Therefore, it is important to understand exactly how compliance techniques act in various settings. For example, when cults recruit new members, they may utilize a foot-in-the-door technique in which a person initially makes a small donation of time to the organization, then makes increasingly bigger sacrifices for the organization (e.g., money), and ultimately joins the cult. In this case, compliance does not lead to positive outcomes. However, there are cases where compliance techniques can have positive outcomes. For example, a heart attack patient who is convinced to walk for 15 minutes a day, may then also agree to alter their diet, give up smoking, and ultimately adopt a healthier lifestyle. This positive change in life-style is also a result of the foot-in-the-door technique where a person is asked to make a small concession, and then later asked to make a bigger concession.

Given the magnitude of impact, as seen in the examples above, it is important to understand how compliance techniques operate. This paper will focus on one specific compliance technique, the door-in-the-face, and how it may potentially affect employment interview decisions. Therefore, the review presented here will discuss the door-in-the-face technique concentrating first on a basic definition, why the technique works, how it has been used, and if it is possible to block its effects. The second part of the review will focus on various factors that can affect interview outcomes. There will be a focus on such aspects as ethnicity, gender, contrast effects, and interviewer

expectancies. Additionally, the benefits and pitfalls of structured interviews will be discussed. Finally, the two overarching areas of research will be integrated and the hypotheses for the current studies will be presented.

Basics of Door-in-the-face

Techniques, such as door-in-the-face (DITF), are used widely throughout a variety of situations. Despite their popular use, they are quite complex to understand. Therefore, this section will aim to explain the basics about the DITF technique before moving on to the more complex aspects of the technique.

DITF was first used by Cialdini et al. (1975) and can be described as making a large request, which most people will turn down, followed by a smaller and more reasonable request, which is typically accepted. In making the request, there are a few important caveats that must be addressed. First, the large request must not be so unreasonable that it is not taken seriously (Cialdini, 2001). It may seem as though the size of the concession (i.e. the difference between the initial and target requests) is most important, but this is not the case (O’Keefe & Hale, 2001). In reality if the initial request is reasonable, the door to DITF is opened.

The second caveat is that the two requests should be made with little time in between (O’Keefe & Hale, 2001). For example, when raising money for a local performing arts center, one might ask first for a donation of \$500-\$1000, which will allow the donator to be named as a benefactor. When this large request is turned down, the requestor should then immediately suggest a smaller donation such as \$50. Tying the requests close together temporally has been shown to be highly successful.

The third caveat to utilizing DITF successfully is that one should person make both requests. Although other compliance techniques work regardless of who makes the initial and target requests, the effects of DITF are maximized when the same person makes both requests (O'Keefe & Hale, 2001)

These caveats are not the only important points to note when studying the DITF technique; they are merely the stepping-stones to fully understanding it. There are many factors, dependent on the situation, which can affect the success of DITF. Many of these factors have been controversial in the literature. The next section, therefore, will focus on four common factors found in the literature that could potentially play a role in DITF.

The Factors Surrounding DITF

Many factors have been identified in relation to the success of gaining compliance using the DITF technique. Although there is ample research indicating that these factors play a role in DITF, it is not clear which factors play the largest role, and which are most universally applicable. Therefore, information will be provided about each of four factors as well as their success or failure.

The first factor addresses the idea of friend vs. stranger. Past research has typically used a stranger as the requestor in testing the effectiveness of DITF. More recent research (Millar, 2002b), however, has tested the difference in compliance rates when a friend rather than a stranger makes the request. By varying who makes the requests, Millar was able to look more closely at what types of variables influence compliance to a smaller request. More specifically, it is reasonable to presume that self-presentation may play a larger role in deciding to accept or reject the request if the requestor will be seen again (i.e. a friend). Past research has shown that self-presentation

motivates a person to accept the second request. Therefore, Millar (2002b) hypothesized that when the requestor is a friend, the participant will be more concerned with self-presentation (and thus accept the smaller request) than people in a single request condition. Millar (2002b) found that when the requestor was a friend, the participant was significantly more likely to comply with the smaller request when it was preceded by a large request that the participant refused. In the single request condition (only the small request was presented) there was not a difference in compliance between the friend and stranger requestor. This shows that DITF works best when the requestor is a friend. The findings presented thus far, however, do not address the self-presentation aspect of the hypothesis.

As Millar (2002b) hypothesized, participants in the DITF condition did report significantly more self-presentational concerns with a friend requestor than with a stranger requestor. Additionally, there was a significant relationship between self-presentation and both verbal and behavioral compliance in the DITF friend condition. Despite this seemingly clear evidence for the role of self-presentation in DITF, there is some evidence showing that self-presentational effects are not always present when DITF is successful.

One such example is the research by Reeves, Baker, Boyd, and Cialdini (1991). These authors attempted to replicate the findings of Pendleton and Batson, who reported evidence of self-presentational effects in DITF in 1979 (as cited in Reeves et al, 1991). Reeves et al were unable to replicate these findings, however. After running four studies utilizing Pendleton and Batson's general procedure and ultimately the exact procedure, Reeves et al (1991) was unable to show that self-presentation motivated compliance with

a DITF request. In a final effort to discover how Pendleton and Batson found self-presentational evidence, Reeves et al combined data from three of the four studies. This combination resulted in statistically significant evidence for self-presentation. The authors (Reeves et al, 1991) warn the reader, however, that three studies had to be combined just to achieve significance, and the effect size was quite low ($r=.13$). Therefore, although there is evidence of self-presentation, it is very weak, which suggests that a self-presentational motive may not be the primary motive behind DITF.

The idea of requestor familiarity and self-presentational concerns are not the only ones to affect DITF success in gaining compliance. Another potential factor is the role of guilt. More specifically, does complying with the smaller request reduce guilt that may exist after having turned down a large request and then seeing the requestor make a concession? In another study by Millar (2002a), it appears that when the requestor induces guilt, participants are more likely to verbally and behaviorally comply with the smaller request than participants who only receive the small request with no guilt induction. In this study, guilt was induced through a suggestion that the participant had violated a standard or damaged the “cause” in some way by refusing the large request. As suggested by the results, the most effective use of guilt appears to occur when guilt is very high and the possibility of guilt reduction is also very high.

A more objective factor affecting DITF success is the strength of the requestor. Strength in this context refers to the power and importance of the requestor. For example, the CEO of a company is a stronger requestor than a janitor at that same company. Williams and Williams (1989) found support for this idea, however it was not significant. They found that when approached by a high strength requestor, participants

were more likely to contribute money to a local zoo (a prosocial activity) than those people who were approached by a low-strength requestor. Given that these findings were not significant, the authors discussed potential reasons for the differences and suggested that participants who were approached by a high-strength requestor were merely concerned with the impression they were giving to the requestor, and therefore complied. Although this hypothesis was not tested, it does seem to add more support to the self-presentational variable, which suggests that more research is still needed.

In this section, several variables that could potentially affect the success rates of the DITF technique have been discussed. There are many variables and factors that can play a role in DITF, such as the familiarity of the requestor, self-presentational concerns, and feelings of guilt. Simply knowing the variables that can play a role is not enough, however. It is necessary to see how the DITF technique is being used, when it is successful, and when it fails. Therefore, in the next section several uses of the DITF will be examined more closely.

How has DITF been used?

There are many ways to use the DITF technique. In this section three specific uses will be examined. First, the potential use of two hard requests will be examined, followed by the technique's use in prosocial and non-prosocial behaviors. Finally, in a more applied setting, the use of DITF will be examined in school interventions.

Goldman and Creason (1981) found that two hard requests before the smaller target request is even more successful in gaining compliance than the traditional single large request. As one might expect, compliance is also greater in the two large requests condition than the control condition of only the target request. Goldman and Creason

(1981) also found that the first request should be extremely hard and the second request should be moderately hard, with the target request being the easiest. On a side note, these findings appear to support the theory of reciprocity, rather than self-presentation.

Although there has been great success with the DITF technique, it does not work in all situations. An important question to ask is whether DITF requests must be prosocial in nature. Throughout research, DITF has been utilized in both prosocial and non-prosocial situations. Despite its use in a variety of settings, however, DITF has been found to only be effective in those settings that are prosocial (O'Keefe & Hale, 2001). Through a meta-analysis, O'Keefe and Hale found that if the request is prosocial (e.g., donating money to a zoo), then the target will be more likely to concede to the smaller request than if the request is not prosocial in nature (e.g., paying mandatory taxes).

In a similar vein of research, Tusing and Dillard (2000) examined whether targets of DITF requests perceive them to be helping (prosocial in nature) or merely a bargaining tool. In fact, targets perceive DITF requests to be helping in nature. This offers evidence that DITF is not based on reciprocal concessions, but instead on social responsibility, which has a more prosocial connotation. Given that targets perceive a helping nature in conceding to DITF requests it makes intuitive sense that prosocial behaviors would be more likely to elicit concession. In support of this, the use of DITF has not been particularly successful in non-prosocial settings. DITF is very successful in situations that are helping in nature, such as giving money to the local zoo for animal care, however.

Although these examples show how and when DITF works, it is important to look at the more practical implications of the technique. This will help to truly understand the

breadth of situations in which DITF will work. One example consists of a classroom/teacher intervention. In this study, Martens, Kelly, and Diskin (1996) asked teachers to complete a packet of questionnaires. After completion, teachers were asked to implement a classroom intervention for 1 hour during each of the following two school days (target request). Prior to this request, teachers in the DITF condition were asked to participate in a follow-up activity that would require one hour each day after school for one week. All teachers in the DITF condition turned down the weeklong commitment as expected. Interestingly, when questioned about the acceptability of the 2-day intervention (i.e. the benefits to the children, appropriate for use in a classroom), teachers in the DITF condition rated its acceptability lower than those who had not receive the DITF large request. This suggests that although the DITF technique succeeded in inducing compliance to the smaller request, it may not always have positive results. More specifically, the negative feelings toward the large request may overshadow the positive effects that are elicited when the requestor concedes to a smaller request. Therefore, the DITF technique should be used cautiously in situations where compliance and acceptance is critical.

It is clear that even outside of the laboratory, the DITF technique works. Although the motives remain unclear, people will concede to a smaller request when it is preceded by a larger request. Given the effectiveness of this technique, then, it is important to know how to combat its effects. This is particularly important where concessions to DITF requests could be potentially harmful, such as in employment settings.

Does knowing about DITF help?

Although it is easy to successfully utilize DITF, it is not as easy to block DITF effects. More specifically, not much is known about how to prevent someone from falling prey to DITF requests. In some cases, concessions to DITF requests are not in the best interest of either party involved, and therefore, researchers need to identify the tactics that will block DITF effects.

An obvious solution is to inform people about what DITF is, how it works, and how it has been used (similar to the outline of this review). Research has shown, however, that even when a person is informed about DITF before a series of requests occurs, they may still fall prey (Katzev & Brownstein, 1989). In one particular instance (Katzev & Brownstein, 1989), participants were given a study to read, which was conducted by Cialdini, about the DITF technique. After reviewing this information, participants reported that they would not succumb to DITF requests. A novel experimenter then asked the participant if they would fast for 24 hours, return to the lab and complete 75 push-ups while attached to electrodes. This request was made under the auspices that the novel experimenter's scheduled participant had cancelled and now he needed someone to fill in. When the subject declined to participate, the experimenter made a smaller request to complete a 2-hour take home math test and then send it in. Results showed that DITF participants, whether informed or uninformed about the technique, did not differ in their compliance toward the math test. Eight days later, a confederate called the participant and asked him/her to answer a large number of questions (55) over the phone. When this large request was refused, they were asked to answer a much smaller number of questions (10). When participants were phoned, there

was again no significant difference among participants who were informed versus uninformed. This suggests that it may not be beneficial to provide the participants with a study showing how DITF works as a means for reducing its effects.

As seen in this section, simply knowing information about DITF is not enough. The effects and potential ways of use must continue to be examined if DITF is to be fully understood, and methods for combating DITF's effects are to be developed. The next section of this review will shift from DITF basics to an applied setting that has not yet been studied and could potentially be affected by DITF effects.

Employment Interviews

Although employment interviews have changed considerably in the past decade, they are still susceptible to subjectivity. Therefore, in the following section, various factors that can affect employment interviews will be examined, and finally one method for reducing bias in interviews will be presented.

Factors affecting interviews outcomes

There are many factors that can affect employment interview outcomes. They range from gender effects to race to interviewer expectancies. In an effort to identify the processes and errors that can occur during an employment interview, Cesare, Dalessio, and Tannenbaum (1988) examined contrast effects. More specifically, they looked at the role of gender and race of an average applicant when either a highly qualified or unqualified candidate preceded them. Cesare et al (1988) found that all applicants would be rated higher if a negative or unqualified candidate preceded them. More specifically, black males were rated higher than the other applicant groups (black females, white males, and white females), and white females were rated higher than white males. When

the preceding candidate was highly qualified, and the applicant was average, white males were rated lower than black males and white females. This shows that the qualification contrast in candidates was not as great for black males and white females as white males. Finally, the level of contrast effects felt by black females fell in between that of black males/white females and white males. This evidence is quite convincing that factors other than qualifications affect the outcome of interviews. Gender and race, however, are not the only factors that have this power.

Another factor, information provided on a pre-interview application, can also play a role in interview outcomes. It is reasonable to think that the information an interviewer receives about an applicant prior to the interview may color their assessment of the applicant's performance in the interview. There is quite a bit of information that must be interpreted and paid attention to during an interview; therefore, an interviewer may look for information during the interview that is consistent the applicant's application.

In a study by Macan and Dipboye (1994), these types of concerns were examined. Participants, acting as interviewers, were given the opportunity to review applicant statements for a sales position. They were then asked to listen to four audiotaped interviews for the sales position. As suggested above, Macan and Dipboye (1994) found that participants expected highly qualified applicants to do a better job of answering interview questions. Participants also rated interview answers more positively when the application was highly favorable than when the application was average or poor. This finding suggests that interviewers may adjust their perceptions of the interview based on prior knowledge of the candidate's qualifications. As we have seen thus far, not only can

factors inherent to the applicant (e.g., gender and race) affect the interview outcome, pre-interview information available to the interviewer can also affect the outcome.

A final factor that can affect the outcome of the interview are an interviewer's expectancies. Reich (2003) examined whether or not an interviewer's pessimism/optimism would affect the way they viewed an interviewee. For example, would a pessimistic interviewer expect the interviewee to be less qualified for the job than an interviewer who is optimistic? If this is true, then an interviewee is confined to the bounds of expectancy set by the interviewer. Furthermore, if this is the case, then a perfectly qualified candidate may be passed over for hiring simply because the interviewer was pessimistic and consequently looked for, or elicited, negative behaviors. Reich (2003) found evidence for this hypothesis. When interviewers had non-extreme expectancies (e.g., not extremely pessimistic or optimistic) they elicited expectancy-consistent behavior from the applicant. Therefore, applicants performed more poorly when the interviewer was pessimistic than when the interviewer was optimistic. Given these findings, interviewer expectancies are another way in which interview outcomes can be biased.

Biased interview outcomes can be quite costly to a company and to the applicant. Someone who is not qualified may inadvertently be hired and someone who is qualified may not be hired. Given the ramifications that exist in failing to accurately assess a job applicant, it is important to reduce as many of these biases as possible. Structured interviews may provide this much needed reduction in bias. Therefore, in the next section, the benefits of structured interviews will be briefly examined, as well as two specific types of structured interviews.

Why use structured interviews?

Structured interviews offer not only a consistent method for interviewing job candidates, but also offer higher criterion validity and reliability than do unstructured interviews (Schmidt & Zimmerman, 2004). So what exactly makes structured interviews better? The interview questions asked are derived from information about the job requirements (Schmidt & Zimmerman, 2004). Many times several different people conduct interviews for a single position; a structured interview gives these people a common method for conducting an interview, recording information gathered, and comparing thoughts.

Past research proclaims the benefits of structured interviews. There is more than one type of structured interview, however, and they may not be equally beneficial. Huffcutt, Conway, Roth, and Klehe (2004) found that when choosing between a situational (SI) or a behavior description interview (BDI), the BDI is a better option when evaluating a high-complexity job. When interviewing for low- or medium-complexity jobs, however, the SI performs comparably to the BDI. This suggests that the method of structured interview chosen may depend on the type of job for which it is being used. Given the potential concerns with the SI, a BDI will be used in the present studies.

Although structured interviews may seem like an ideal method for gathering information about an applicant, new research shows that the information must be taken with a grain of salt. It appears that despite the predictive validity of structured interviews they may not actually measure the constructs we think (Van Iddekinge, Raymark, Eidson, & Attenweiler, 2004). Therefore, when accuracy in decision-making is of prime

importance, measures with known validity should be used in addition to structured interviews.

Integration of DITF and Interviews

It is evident from the literature presented thus far that DITF is a complex compliance technique that has not only been used in a variety of settings, but has been successful in a variety of settings. DITF is typically utilized most successfully in prosocial situations, such as helping others. Employment situations are also seen as an opportunity for a prosocial behavior: giving someone a job and a way to support themselves and family members. This offers support the case made here: that DITF may be playing a role in employment decisions given the prosocial nature of granting someone a job.

Another reason DITF could be successful in interview settings is that the technique works on strangers. Although there is evidence showing that DITF works best when the requestor is a friend, there is also evidence that it works when the requestor is a stranger. In employment situations the applicant and interviewer are occasionally friends, but they are most often strangers. In either case, DITF could clearly play a role in the outcome of the interview.

The success of DITF in a variety of situations and requestors are not the only links between it and interview outcomes. As shown in the previous section, interviewers are often subjective in their ratings of applicants. Furthermore, this subjectivity colors applicant's true qualifications. This subjectivity can result in hiring someone who is unqualified. Given the ease in which outside factors affect the interview outcome, DITF could also play a role in interviews through this outlet.

The relationship between employment interview outcomes and the success of DITF in these settings is critical to the work place for many reasons. Perhaps the most important reason for understanding this relationship is that an applicant's use of DITF techniques may result in the employer making an unwise job offer. For example, if an interviewee knows about DITF they may be able to set up a series of requests for a job (i.e. large followed by smaller). The applicant may consequently get a job offer, not due to their qualifications but through reliance on factors such as guilt, self-presentation, and the norm of reciprocity.

Another potential consequence of the DITF technique is the potential for a workplace accident. If an applicant is hired to work on a manufacturing plant floor, but does not know how to work any of the equipment and is not offered enough training, the employee could have an accident resulting in employee and equipment harm. At this point, being susceptible to the DITF technique in an interview could cost a company millions in workers compensation claims and equipment repair or replacement.

It is clear, that if the DITF technique can play a role in employment interview outcomes, it will be necessary to identify methods for reducing its effects. The proposed studies will not only examine whether or not DITF has an effect on interview outcomes, but will also investigate potential methods for reducing these effects, such as providing information on the technique and structuring the interview process. Among the independent variables that will be examined are request conditions (DITF vs. Control), interview format (Structured vs. Unstructured), and information level (Informed vs. Uninformed).

Given past research into both DITF and factors affecting employment interview outcomes, it is expected that DITF will affect the outcome of interviews. More specifically, the prosocial nature of offering a job and the known success of DITF lead to the prediction that DITF will affect interview outcomes such that:

Hypothesis 1: Interviewers will be more likely to agree to a small request for employment when it is preceded by a large request.

After identifying the relationship between DITF and interviews, the next step is to identify potential solutions to this problem. One method that may reduce the effects of DITF is to structure the interview. Employers who are using unstructured interviews to assess applicants may not be asking the right questions to access job specific qualifications and data. This would prevent them from making an informed employment decision. Given that structured interviews reduce the amount of subjective evaluation of an applicant, it may be easier for the interviewer to objectively determine if a job should be offered. Therefore, it is expected that:

Hypothesis 2: Interviewers will accept significantly fewer small requests for a position when using the provided structured interview than when no interview format is provided.

Finally, one last method for reducing the effects of DITF will be examined. Past research has not overwhelmingly supported providing information on DITF as a way to reduce its effects, but in conjunction with a structured interview format, it may be more effective. Therefore, it is expected that:

Hypothesis 3: Interviewers who receive information about DITF and use a structured interview format will be significantly less likely to accept small requests for a position than those in the other conditions.

Methods

Participants

Participants will consist of 590 introductory psychology undergraduate students (30 participants in pilot study, 80 participants in Study 1, 160 participants in Study 2, 320 participants in Study 3). Participants will be given course credit in exchange for participation. The job applicant will be a confederate assigned to answer interview questions and to either make a large then small employment request (DITF condition) or only a small request (Control condition). Half of the participants will interview a male confederate and the other half a female. All participants will be randomly assigned to an experimental condition, and no participants will complete more than one study.

Pilot Study

A pilot study will be conducted to ensure that the requests are sufficiently different as well as reasonable.

Participants

Participants will consist of 30 undergraduate students.

Materials

Believability. This measure consists of 5 questions assessing the believability of the statements, whether or not the small request was perceived to be smaller than the large request, and whether the request is likely to be granted by the interviewer. (See Appendix A)

Procedure

Participants will be presented with the two request statements that will be used in Studies 1, 2, and 3. The large request statement is “Why don’t you hire me on a 6-month

trial basis”. The smaller request statement is “Why don’t you hire me on a 90-day trial basis (instead)”. After reading these two statements, participants will be asked to complete a series of five questions, which can be found in Appendix A. After completing this measure, participants will be thanked for their participation and dismissed.

Appropriate adjustments to the statements will be made.

Study 1

The goal of Study 1 is to determine the extent to which DITF plays a role in employment interview decisions. Although employment requests during actual interviews may not be as blatant as those presented here, it is still possible that an applicant may ask for a “chance”, which classifies as an employment request. Given that DITF is quite successful in prosocial requests, it is suspected that DITF will play a role in whether or not employment is offered. Therefore, this study will give basic information about this relationship and provide a test of Hypothesis 1.

Participants

Participants will consist of 80 undergraduate students. They will be randomly assigned to one of two conditions: those receiving the DITF request (large then small) and those in the control condition (receive only the small request). A confederate will be used in this study to act as the job applicant described above.

Materials

Job Description. The job description provided to the participants will be for a car insurance sales position. Information included will be the location, salary, job level, and job purpose. Additionally, key tasks for the position will be listed as well as a strongly preferred skill set. (See Appendix B)

Resume. The resume presented represents an applicant who possesses some of the qualifications needed for the job, but lacks actual experience for the sales position. Therefore, this candidate should be viewed as unsuited for the job. Included in the information are points about educational background, professional experience, and computer skills. (See Appendix C)

Employment Recommendation. This form includes three questions. The first asks whether or not the interviewer (participant) recommends employment. The second two questions ask if there should be any restrictions placed on the employment, what they should be, and why the employment decision was made. (See Appendix D)

Demographics. Based on past research, it is known that many factors affect both interview outcomes and DITF success. Therefore, this measure consists of variables that will be controlled for in data analysis. Included are race, sex, age, whether or not the participant knew the confederate, and whether or not the participant had ever conducted an interview in the past. (See Appendix E)

Procedure

Participants will be instructed upon arriving to the lab that they will be conducting an interview for an open sales position in the local mall. Participants will be told that the store manager will carry out the employment decision they make (to hire, to not hire, or to offer trial employment to the applicant). After understanding their role in the interview, participants will be given a brief job description (see Appendix B), which includes the preferred job qualifications for the sales position. They will be instructed to read this information as many times as necessary to feel comfortable that they understand the duties of the job. At this time, the participant will be given five minutes to review the

resume of the job applicant they will be interviewing (see Appendix C). They will then be given another five minutes to generate any interview questions they think will be helpful in determining whether or not to offer employment. After this time has elapsed, the applicant (a confederate) will enter the room and both people will be informed that the interview will be taped for quality assurance purposes, per the request of the store manager. At this time, the researcher will instruct the participant that they will have ten minutes to complete the interview and will then leave the room. During the interview, the confederate will answer any questions that the participant asks in a manner congruent with the information provided on the resume. Depending on the experimental condition, at the end of the interview the confederate will either make the large request followed by the smaller request (DITF condition) or make only the small request for employment (Control condition). At this point the researcher will return and instruct the pair that the interview is complete and the participant must now complete a form either recommending or not recommending employment, and the terms they suggest (i.e. trial employment) (see Appendix D). Finally, the participant will be asked to complete a brief demographics survey (See Appendix E). Following the completion of this form, the participant will be fully debriefed and probed for any suspicion of the manipulation presented as well as the believability of the interview.

Study 2

Assuming that DITF plays a role in employment interview decisions, it is necessary to determine methods for reducing this bias. Past research has shown that structured interviews can create an objective environment for making employment decisions and provide more job relevant information. Therefore, this study will use a 2x2

experimental design to test Hypothesis 2. As in Study 1, there will be a DITF and control condition. In addition, half of the participants will receive a structured interview, and half will be instructed to create interview questions as in Study 1.

Participants

Participants will consist of 160 undergraduate students. Participants will be randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions: DITF/structured interview (40), DITF/unstructured interview (40), Control/structured interview (40), Control/unstructured interview (40). The same confederates used in Study 1 will again act as the job applicant in Study 2. The confederate will reply in the unstructured interview using the same method as Study 1 and will provide memorized responses to the questions in the structured interview.

Materials

Structured Interview. The questions included assess not only background educational training, but job specific areas as well. Three questions will be asked assessing the applicant's customer service skills, ability to advise clients, and how he/she works in an ongoing manner with clients. A standard response is provided with each question. These answers are again meant to show that the applicant possesses some of the qualifications for the sales position, but is not overwhelmingly qualified (See Appendix F)

Method

Using a 2x2 design, the same procedure will be used in this study that was used in Study 1, with one exception. Participants in the structured interview condition will be instructed to read over the questions provided for five minutes (See Appendix F),

whereas the unstructured interview group will again be given five minutes to generate interview questions.

Study 3

Although it is expected that the structured interview will decrease the effects of DITF in an interview setting, it may not completely eliminate the effects. As suggested in previous research (Van Iddekinge et al, 2004), structured interviews may not always control for all individual differences among the interviewers. Therefore, this study will provide participants with information about the DITF technique. This information may potentially allow participants to guard against DITF requests and make an employment decision not based on a prosocial motive, but instead on an applicant's qualifications. Past research has suggested that even when someone receives information on DITF, this may not help the person to avoid its pitfalls. Although it is hypothesized that information will reduce the effects of DITF, this may not be the case. Therefore, this study is meant to provide insight into the basic relationship between receiving DITF information and employment decisions, and test Hypothesis 3.

Participants

Participants will consist of 320 undergraduate students. Participants will be randomly assigned to one of the eight experimental conditions. See Table 1. The same confederates used in Study 1 and 2 will again act as the job applicant in the current study. The confederate will reply in the unstructured interview in the same method as above and will provide memorized responses to the questions in the structured interview.

Materials

Passages. Two passages from Alleydog.com (2004a; 2004b) are used. One passage describes the DITF technique and provides an example. The second passage, to be used in the control condition, describes the field of health psychology. (See Appendix G)

Method

The same method used in Study 2 will be used in Study 3 with one change. Prior to meeting the job applicant, and after reviewing/generating interview questions, participants will be given 5 minutes to read a short passage. Participants in the informed condition will receive information on the DITF technique; participants in the uninformed condition will receive a passage describing health psychology (AlleyDog.com, 2004a; AlleyDog.com, 2004b)). See Appendix G. After the participant has had five minutes to read the passage, the interview will proceed as described above.

Discussion

Despite the lack of research currently examining the effects of DITF in employment interviews, there are several implications of such research. If DITF is found to play a role in interview decisions (Study 1) then it is necessary to understand how to minimize these effects, which is the purpose of Study 2 and 3. With such information, it will be possible to better train interviewers.

If simply structuring the interview is found to reduce the effects of DITF, then a company can offer training on the use of structured interviews to all associates who conduct employment interviews, and provide them with a company approved interview tool. During this training, the interviewers should be instructed on the overall benefits of

the structured interview to help them understand why it is important to use the provided tool. Additionally, if providing information on DITF reduces its effects, then during new interviewer training, an informational segment on DITF can be included.

Future research, therefore, should focus on methods for reducing the effects of DITF in employment decisions. Provided that the research here finds such a relationship, training programs should plan to incorporate additional information on DITF. The type of training suggested here may lead to more objective and successful employment decisions in the future.

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Appendices

Table 1

2x2x2 Design for Study 3

	DITF Condition	Control Condition
Structured – Informed	40 participants	40 participants
Structured-Uninformed	40 participants	40 participants
Unstructured-Informed	40 participants	40 participants
Unstructured-Uninformed	40 participants	40 participants

Appendix ABelievability

Please answer each question with the following requests in mind. These requests are being made in a job interview by the applicant. Each question can be answered on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Statement A: Why don't you hire me on a 6-month trial basis?

Statement B: Why don't you hire me on a 90-day trial basis (instead)?

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
1. Statement A is a believable request.					
2. The request in Statement A is likely to be granted by the interviewer.					
3. Statement B is a believable request.					
4. The request in Statement B is likely to be granted by the interviewer.					
5. Statement B is considerably smaller than Statement A.					

Appendix BSales– Car Insurance
Job Description

Position Type	Part-time
Location	Greenville, SC
Salary	Commensurate with relevant sales experience
Job Level	Mid-Level
Job Purpose	To assist customers in selecting the appropriate insurance.

Key Tasks:

Sales and Customer Service

1. Greet customers when they enter the office and provide them with your name.
2. Advise the customer on the type of insurance that will best meet their needs both now and the immediate future.
3. Provide customer with current rates and benefits of at least 3 different coverage options.
4. Retrieve appropriate paperwork for desired insurance coverage.
5. Aid the customer in completing the insurance paperwork.
6. Maintain contact every customer for whom you set up an insurance plan a minimum of once a year to make sure they are satisfied and to suggest any new benefits that are now available.

Filing and Information Storage

1. File the completed paperwork with all signatures in the appropriate place.
2. If there are problems with the paperwork, resolve these and then file the paperwork immediately.
3. Maintain a file of each customer's preferences and insurance needs.

Strongly Preferred Skills:

1. 2+ years experience in insurance sales
2. 1+ years in customer service
3. HS Diploma/GED
4. Good communication skills (phone)
5. Computer skills: E-mail, Word, Excel, etc.

Appendix C

Robert/Robin M. Clark

1 N. Main Street • Greenville, SC 29601

Phone: (H) 864-254-0373 (C) 864-884-4243 • Email: rmclark@yahoo.com

Objective:

Challenging job in insurance sales

Education:

Bachelor of Arts in English, Clemson University

May 2005

Professional Experience:

Childcare

May 2004 – July 2004

Tots r Us

Assisted with the care of 5 children ranging from 3 months to 10-years-old.
Duties included making lunch for the children, playing with them, and putting them down for a nap in the morning and afternoon.

Staff News Writer

The Tiger

September 2003 - May 2004

Wrote pieces concerning students' opinions on controversial topics at Clemson and in politics.

Cashier

June 2001-August 2002

Walmart

Duties included checking customers out at the front of the store, making change for customers, and resolving any price check concerns.

Computer Skills:

Experience with PC. Microsoft Word, Excel.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER DATA AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Appendix D

Employment Recommendation

1. Do you recommend this applicant for employment?

Yes

No

2. If you recommended this applicant for employment, do you recommend any restriction on employment?

Yes (please describe your recommendation) _____

No

3. Please briefly describe why you made this (these) employment decision(s).

Appendix E

Demographics

1. Age: _____

2. Sex:
___ Male
___ Female

3. Race: _____

4. Did you know the applicant?
___ Yes
___ No

5. Have you ever conducted an interview before today?
___ Yes
___ No

If yes, for what type of position(s) did you act as the interviewer?

Appendix F

Interview Questions

Background Information

College_____ Yrs.____ Degree/Major_____ GPA___ out of_____

Tech. School _____ Yrs.____ Degree/Major_____ GPA___ out of_____

High School_____ Graduation Year_____

Other education/training_____

Customer Service

Tell me about a time when you've done your best to try to satisfy a particular customer?

Answer: Once, when I was working at Walmart, I had someone at checkout who thought the price that came up on the register was wrong. I assured her that the price was correct and then continued ringing up her other items.

Advising Clients

Tell me about a time when you had to provide information to someone about various options available to them and the benefits of the options.

Answer: When I worked in childcare, I had to discuss with the parents how many naps their child would take while in daycare. At the time we offered either one or two naps.

Ongoing work with Clients

When have you found the most personal satisfaction in a job or with your work? What were you doing and why was that especially satisfying? Do you enjoy working with someone over many months or even years?

Answer: When I was working on the school paper, I really enjoyed being self-reliant. I could find the answers without having to go through a lot of different people first. But on the other hand, I didn't mind helping other people when they needed forms or extra explanations about a new policy. I really liked working with the other people on the staff, many of whom were there the entire time I worked there.

Appendix G

DITF Passage

Door-in-the-Face Technique: This is a technique used to get compliance from others (to get them to behave in a way you want) in which a large request is made knowing it will probably be refused so that the person will agree to a much smaller request. The real objective is to get the person to agree to the small request, which is made to seem very reasonable because it is compared to such a large, seemingly unreasonable request. In essence, the large request gets you the "door in the face" when you ask it. For example, someone might ask you to give 5 hours of your time a week for the next year as a volunteer to a charity. After hearing this offer you may think it is a huge request, after which you may be asked to, instead of committing to all this volunteering time, to just donate a small amount of money. Compared to the time commitment, this request seems much more acceptable.

Uniformed Passage

Health Psychology: Health Psychology focuses on the more medical aspects of psychology and applies psychological principles to healing physical illness and medical problems. Health Psychology has grown so much in recent years that it is no longer a field made up of just Health Psychologists. Instead, clinicians, Social Psychologists, and others all conduct research on health topics. For example, a Social Psychologist may conduct studies to determine the different causes of group pressure, while a clinical psychologist may study ways to reduce stress-induced illnesses through relaxation techniques.

The APA defines Health Psychology (division 38) in the following way: "Health Psychology seeks to advance contributions of psychology to the understanding of health and illness through basic and clinical research, education, and service activities and encourages the integration of biomedical information about health and illness with current psychological knowledge." For additional information about Health Psychology you can visit the "official" health psychology website located at: <http://www.health-psych.org/>