

A Grounded Theory Approach to Studying Dislocated Workers' Decisions and Perceptions  
Regarding Retraining and Reemployment Programs and Services

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(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to investigate the decisions and perceptions of Lane Company's dislocated workforce regarding retraining and reemployment programs funded by the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation), Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), both organizations, or neither organization. Thirteen Lane Company dislocated workers were interviewed utilizing an open-ended questionnaire. The results of this study indicated that the retraining and reemployment needs of Lane Company's dislocated workers were accommodated. However, to accommodate those needs, two organizations were required, the VEC and the MBL Foundation. The VEC was instituted by the federal and state government to provide retraining and reemployment services to dislocated workers via the Trade Act of 1974. The MBL Foundation, a nonprofit organization, was established to provide funding for retraining and reemployment programs to Lane Company's dislocated workforce. Many dislocated workers approached the VEC to apply for retraining, but found that the funding was insufficient or the retraining program they desired was not approved under the Trade Act. The dislocated workers perceived the MBL Foundation as an alternative for supplementary retraining funds and programs they preferred. An approach to provide for the needs of dislocated workers is to revise and appropriate additional funds to the Trade Act. Moreover, the manner in which Lane Company's dislocated workers were accommodated may possibly stand as a model for meeting the needs of other dislocated workers.

## Dedication

This dissertation exemplifies more than just a study, but an era within my life, encompassing nine years that was forged by vast experiences and influences of family, friends, and society in general. This phase of my life, similar to many people, has seen its ups and downs. Sacrifice and persistence has brought knowledge and this dissertation into existence, but not by independence. Indeed, an endeavor that extends nine years, takes more than an individual to make it a success. My prayer as I enter the next phase of my life is that I can utilize the knowledge that I have attained to make this world a better place, and the people that made this possible proud to say, I was their son, brother, grandson, cousin, nephew, uncle, friend, student, colleague, or alumni. With that said, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28, KJV). Foremost, I give praise and glory to Jesus. Through faith in Jesus all things are possible and it was through him that this great undertaking was accomplished. As I give praise to our Father in Heaven, I dedicate this dissertation in the memory of my grandparents, Clarence and Estelle Creasy and Charlie Burnett. Thank you all for being the greatest influences and instilling the confidence to pursue my dreams.

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## Chapter One

### *Introduction*

After World War II, America's soldiers returned home from the battlefield to start families, businesses, and create jobs for the populace. The post-World War II era created a boom in America's industries and a surge in the population as a result of the births of the baby boom generation. A major outcome of the post-war boom was the abundance of jobs within the diverse industries of America. In particular, America's furniture industry flourished during the post-World War II era.

Lane Company was a furniture manufacturer located in Altavista, Virginia, and founded in 1912 by Ed Lane. The industrial boom after WWII propelled Lane Company to become one of the world's largest manufacturers of fine furniture with secure careers for its employees. In Lane Company's prime, it employed over 2,000 employees in Altavista. However, in 1987, the Lane family lost control of the Lane Company to Interco, a St. Louis investment group. After the takeover, Bernard Bell "B.B." Lane, the chairman of Lane Company, resigned his office. Mr. Lane and his wife, Minnie Bassett Lane, dedicated their lives to serving the local community through overseeing operations of the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation).

During the 1990s, Interco restructured its company and changed its name to Furniture Brands International (FBI). As the 20<sup>th</sup> century came to a close, FBI had established itself as a global competitor within the furniture industry by migrating and expanding its furniture manufacturing operations overseas. The new millennium brought increased overseas expansions and closings of FBI's American manufacturing plants such as Lane Company. In June 2002, FBI shut down Lane Company's manufacturing operations within the U.S., dislocating 1,000 workers.

As layoffs occurred, many of Lane's former employees participated in retraining and reemployment programs funded through the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). Some of Lane's dislocated workers turned down government-funded programs through the VEC and participated in programs funded through the MBL Foundation. Other Lane workers participated in both the VEC and MBL Foundation funded programs. Additionally, a portion of Lane Company's dislocated workers did not participate in either the MBL Foundation or VEC programs.

The VEC coordinates employment benefits and programs for all Virginians, including Virginia's dislocated workers. The VEC's mission states: "We provide workforce services that promote maximum employment to enhance the economic stability of Virginia" (VEC, 2003).

Services for dislocated workers provided through the VEC include

1. Unemployment compensation and insurance: The VEC administers a variety of programs that may provide temporary income for workers who have become unemployed.
2. Job seeker services: Provides employment assistance, access to thousands of job listings, and resources to help unemployed individuals find employment.
3. Retraining benefits provided under the Trade Act of 1974: Trade Act programs are available to assist individuals who have become unemployed as a result of increased imports from foreign countries. The VEC provides funding to help laid off workers return to suitable employment as soon as possible (VEC, 2003).

The VEC presented information about unemployment compensation, retraining, and reemployment benefits to the dislocated workforce at Lane's manufacturing facilities when the layoff was announced. The timing of this announcement allowed for the dislocated workers to know what benefits they were entitled to, and allowed a way for the VEC to reach all workers involved in the layoff.

The MBL Foundation was founded to provide financial support to the local community. After the layoff was announced, Minnie Lane established the Lane Educational Trust Fund to

sponsor retraining and reemployment opportunities for Lane Company's dislocated workers.

Services provided to Lane Company dislocated workers include

1. Funding for any retraining programs desired by the dislocated worker.
2. Funding for all expenses endured by the dislocated worker while attending retraining, such as books, gas, computers, uniforms, and childcare.
3. Funding to help dislocated workers start small businesses
4. Assists dislocated workers in finding new employment by recommending dislocated workers to employers.

Funding for the Lane Educational Trust Fund flowed from three sources of donations, MBL Foundation, a personal gift from Mr. Landon Lane, Jr., and FBI. Most Altavista citizens know the MBL Foundation as the Lane Foundation. It is important to recognize that the MBL Foundation is unique. During the 1940s, Lane Company started a company-owned version of the Lane Foundation (separate from the family owned Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation) to provide funding for worthwhile charities. After the takeover of Lane Company, the foundation and funds were lost to the new owners (FBI). Minnie Lane protested that FBI give back over \$300,000, which should be used to help the dislocated workers. Influenced by Minnie Lane, FBI gave back the money. Under the leadership of Minnie Lane and her staff, the MBL Foundation, like the VEC, has sponsored Lane's dislocated workers to attend retraining programs and pay for expenses such as books, computers, software, and in some cases, small businesses, food, childcare, and rent. Also, the MBL Foundation coordinates with area companies to place former Lane workers into new jobs. According to Minnie Lane, "Our purpose is to help our family of Lane Company dislocated workers find new jobs and retrain efficiently and without hassle" (M.

Lane, personal communication, October 9, 2002). The Administrator of the Lane Education Trust Fund, Steve Jester, explained the purpose as the following

“Our purpose is a no nonsense approach to help the dislocated workers of Lane Company find retraining and new jobs. We make an effort to find a reason to say yes to the former Lane workers. The last thing we want is to make it difficult for those people to find help” (S. Jester, personal communication, October 9, 2002).

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to investigate the decisions and perceptions of Lane Company’s dislocated workforce regarding retraining and reemployment programs funded by the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation), Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), both organizations, or neither organization. According to Hamrick (2001), research of rural dislocated workers’ experiences of layoffs has been underrepresented in current literature and needs to be addressed. Furthermore, no current research has addressed whether dislocated workers are well served by Federal programs and legislation designed to assist dislocated workers. The aim of the researcher was to study dislocated workers and their experiences with Federal programs and nonprofit programs designed to assist them. The results of this study assisted the researcher to understand, from the dislocated worker’s point of view, the reasons why dislocated workers are, or are not, participating in VEC or MBL Foundation funded programs for dislocated workers. Additionally, it may help training providers tailor programs to fit the needs of dislocated workers by understanding why dislocated workers participate, or do not participate, in their educational programs. By understanding the reasons why dislocated workers participate, or do not participate, in federal aid programs, policymakers can use the results of this study to determine how to implement federal funds more effectively to help dislocated workers receive needed benefits for reemployment or retraining. This information can

help the VEC and MBL Foundation improve their services to meet the needs of dislocated workers.

### *Research Questions*

The following questions will be addressed:

1. Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
2. Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose not to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
3. What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the Virginia Employment Commission and the retraining and reemployment services they provide?
4. What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the MBL Foundation and the retraining and reemployment services they provide?

### *Importance of Study*

In accordance with Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, the Virginia Employment Commission is required to evaluate the services it provides to dislocated workers.

The WIA measures of evaluation are explained as follows

Title II establishes performance indicators for all adult, dislocated workers, and youth programs to be applied to States as well as local areas. There are four core indicators relating to adult, dislocated worker programs, and youth ages 19-21 (i.e. placement, retention, and earnings, and skill attainment). The Secretary of Labor is to negotiate the expected levels of performance for each indicator with each State, and the State in turn is to negotiate expected levels of performance with each local area. Negotiations are to take into account special economic and demographic factors. Technical assistance, sanctions, and Federal incentive funds are tied to whether States meet the expected levels of performance (Department of Labor, 2002).

Although the VEC evaluates their services provided to dislocated workers that participate in their programs, there is no accounting system for the needs of dislocated workers who do not participate. Additionally, there is no legislation that requires nonprofit organizations to account for the dislocated workers who participate in their programs. Thus, the importance of this study was to analyze the needs of a sample of dislocated workers that participate, or do not participate, in programs of the VEC or nonprofit organizations.

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) accentuate that studies of adults participating in educational programs, such as retraining, are similar to a market analysis in business. Successful companies conduct regular analyses of their customers' needs to maintain and improve their services. This study provided such an analysis of the Lane's dislocated workforce.

The VEC and other federal agencies may also use the results of this study to psychologically relate to a layoff situation and increase dislocated worker participation in government retraining programs. According to Cross (1981), attitudes are a very important element in the decision -making process of adults deciding whether to participate in a learning activity. Attitudes arise from an adult's past experiences and indirectly from the attitudes and experiences of friends, family, and significant others.

The results of a recent study of Alabama textile workers helped government officials understand the attitudes of dislocated workers during such a turbulent time. Many of the government officials who dealt with these situations and displaced workers never personally experienced a layoff, and the study helped them empathize with the workers on a deeper level (Lankford, 2000). This understanding of dislocated workers' attitudes improved reemployment and retraining services for Alabama's dislocated workforce. Additionally, the results helped training providers to design appropriate learning activities and counseling techniques.

According to Courtney (1991), adult participation research can: 1) help training providers determine the content of educational programs for adult learners, and 2) training providers can use this information to enhance their programs for dislocated workers by understanding what motivates adults to participate in retraining. Nonprofit organizations, such as the MBL Foundation, may also benefit from the results of this research by acquiring a sense of how their participants view them and their services.

Legislative officials can use this research to consider introducing amendments to current legislation to reflect the needs and concerns of dislocated workers. Therefore, the researcher's goal was to uncover the true feelings, emotions, and perceptions of the dislocated workers of Lane Company. Once the concerns and perceptions were uncovered, the researcher made recommendations on what can be done to improve services of the VEC and MBL Foundation according to the dislocated workers of Lane Company.

### *Delimitations*

Boundaries limit values placed on constructs within a theoretical model (Bacharach, 1989). The boundaries that exist are: (1) studying workers of one company, (2) studying workers that live in a rural area, (3) interviewing a small sample of the total dislocated workforce, (4) not being able to generalize to other states or other areas of the state, and (5) only collecting data from Lane Company dislocated workers that qualify for retraining and reemployment benefits under the Trade Act and WIA legislation.

### *Limitations*

Limitations of the study are: (1) Lane Company's dislocated workers are in different stages of retraining, reemployment, and coping with the layoff, and (2) the data collected through the interviews relies on participants' memories and perceptions.



## *Definition of Terms*

This section will provide definitions of terms that are unique to this study and may possibly be interpreted in a way that contradicts the researcher's definition.

*Displaced or Dislocated Workers:* individuals who have been terminated or laid off, or who have received notice of termination or layoff from employment (Department of Labor, 2002).

*Eligible Training Providers:* a public or private provider of a training program that has been determined by the state or local workforce investment board to meet specific requirements as to performance and costs and, thus, is eligible to receive Trade and/or WIA funds (Department of Labor, 2002).

*Employed:* working 15 hours or more per week as verified by the Department of Jobs and Training records (Department of Labor, 2002).

*Globalization:* the integration of all world economies into one global system of free trade that knows no territorial boundaries, where nations can trade goods and services without restrictions (Giddens, 1990; Hirst and Thomson, 1996; Scholte, 2000).

*Reemployment Services:* basic services provided to trade-affected workers by workforce development agencies include the following: employment registration, employment counseling, vocational testing, job referral, job development, supportive services, job search workshop, and job finding club (Department of Labor, 2002).

*Retraining Services:* training services provided to trade-affected workers by workforce development agencies include the following: occupational skills training, on-the-job training, skills improvement, GED preparation, English as a second language (ESL), and math and reading training (Department of Labor, 2002).

*Service/Training Provider:* any public, non-profit or profit organization that delivers educational, training, or employment services (Department of Labor, 2002).

*Suitable Employment:* work of a substantially equal or higher skill level, paying not less than 80% of the worker's average weekly wage, which does not include self-employment or employment as an independent contractor (Department of Labor, 2002).

*Training:* the acquisition of skills, concepts, or attitudes that result in improved performance in an on-the-job environment (Goldstein, 1980).

### *Summary*

As manufacturers search for strategies to reduce labor costs to become more competitive in the world economy, the probability of mass layoffs to remain competitive will continue. For some of these workers, a job loss will become long-term. Many dislocated workers will have the option of participating in retraining and reemployment services provided by federal and state governments and nonprofit organizations. One of the major concerns for government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and training providers is why dislocated workers chose to participate in their programs. This study focused on the perceptions of dislocated workers and how these perceptions influenced their decision to participate in government and nonprofit organization funded retraining and reemployment programs.

## Chapter Two

### *Literature Review*

The literature review is divided into three sections that illustrate the issues that affect dislocated workers and their decision to participate in retraining.

- Dislocated/displaced workers: defines, describes causes for, and presents the characteristics of dislocated workers.
- Adult participation in retraining and education: presents studies and theoretical models of why adults participate in educational activities.
- Cooperative Extension: presents studies that describe how Cooperative Extension helps build strong communities.

#### *Dislocated/displaced workers*

*Definition.* A dislocated or displaced worker is defined as an individual who has been terminated or laid off, or who has received notice or termination of layoff from employment (Department of Labor, 2002). Dislocated workers are also individuals with established work histories, who lost their jobs through no fault of their own (Browne, 1985). Hamrick (2001) emphasizes that dislocated workers are likely to encounter considerable difficulty finding comparable employment due to skills disparity between workers and jobs. Fallick (1996) found that some workers are displaced because they have a strong attachment to the sector of their lost job. For example, in many small towns throughout the Southern region of the U.S., textiles and furniture industries have employed generations of citizens where workers become accustomed to the “Mill” as a way of life and not just a career.

*Cause for dislocation.* U.S. industries are relocating to second and third world countries for cheaper labor to compete with firms, and to provide the U.S. consumer with lower prices for

goods and services. There are many profitable benefits for the overseas economic restructuring of U.S. companies. Many world-renowned economists, political leaders, and business leaders (e.g., Greenspan, 2002; Cateora, 1996; Clinton, 2000; Bush, 1994; Krugman & Maurice, 2000; Ricardo, 1817; Smith, 1776) agree that countries trade by the rationale of a country's absolute advantage and comparative advantage. A country that has an absolute advantage can produce products at a lower cost than another country (Smith, 1776). Countries that have a comparative advantage, on the other hand, may be able to specialize in the production of what they produce most efficiently, and trade with other countries for goods and services that they do not produce efficiently (Ricardo, 1817). These theories are the foundation for free world trade legislation such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a comprehensive trade agreement that approves virtually all aspects of doing business within North America. NAFTA will eliminate tariffs completely, and remove many of the non-tariff barriers, such as import licenses, that have helped to exclude U.S. goods from the other markets, especially Canada and Mexico (US Trade Representative, 2002). Canada's Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, Mexico's President, Salinas de Gortari, and U.S. President, George H. W. Bush, signed NAFTA into law on January 1, 1994. NAFTA benefits each country involved by creating the world's largest trading bloc, including over 400 million consumers and a mammoth free-trade zone stretching from the Arctic Circle to Latin America (Rowntree, Lewis, Price, and Wyckoff, 2003). Free-trade zones are industrial parks within a country where foreign corporations can utilize cheap labor and avoid trade tariffs, resulting in higher profits and lower prices for the consumer (Cateora, 1996).

Economic restructuring of U.S. companies overseas also has disadvantages, such as mass layoffs. Estes, Schweke, and Lawrence (2002) present the consequences of American industry migrating to foreign countries:

Economic restructuring may be good for consumers, for shareholders, and for employees in growing firms, but certain workers, occupations, and sectors will take it on the chin. And, depending on the workers' occupational skills and the state of the local economy, they may face big obstacles in accessing a decent job.

According to most analysts, the dislocation problem developing today can be expected to continue, if not to worsen. International market forces and rapid technological advances will continue to render some industries unprofitable and some occupations obsolete. More often than not, the critical component of these changes is the relative cost of labor. The opening up of foreign markets that offer cheap and unregulated (and unprotected) labor has created opportunities for firms to move operations out of the U.S. and expand their profit margins (producing the loss of whole plants out of U.S. communities). Similarly, foreign firms, especially in manufacturing, can now access the U.S. market and with their cheaper sources of labor, can price U.S. manufacturers out of their respective markets (producing layoffs, less work hours, and other cost-reduction methods). Thus, the concept is that the "free market ain't free" when you are a worker in one of these industries (p.3).

*Characteristics.* Dislocated workers face extreme challenges of locating new employment because they work in declining industries (Collins, 1998; Estes, Schweke, & Lawrence, 2002; Hamrick, 2001; Kane & Duggan, 1991; Lawrence & Schweke, 2002; Jacobson, 1998; Jacobson, LaLonde, & Sullivan, 1993), such as the manufacturing of textiles and furniture, and do not have job skills demanded by current industry and/or basic skills such as reading or writing. Lawrence and Schweke (2002) observe dislocated workers' characteristics as the following

In comparison with unemployed persons who are simply between jobs, nationally they tend to be older; have less education; be less geographically mobile; be more often male; be accustomed to relatively high wages and therefore likely to experience significant earnings losses; be homeowners and contributing members of the community; be concentrated in declining employment areas; and be more likely to experience psychological and health problems upon job loss (pp. 3-4).

Kane and Duggan (1991) describe typical dislocated workers as being between the ages of 24 and 54 years, that have lost jobs held for three or more years because of a plant shut down

or relocation. Hipple (1999) stated that manufacturer layoffs accounted for the largest proportion of displaced workers within the U.S. Hamrick (2001) reported that during the 1980s, rural/nonmetro (less than 50,000 population) areas suffered layoffs from manufacturing industries more than urban/metro areas. Rural/nonmetro dislocated workers have been found to endure more hardships from layoffs than their urban/metro counterparts due to a lack of available jobs, their lower levels of education, and a lack of skills demanded by industry. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2002), 15 percent of all displaced workers in rural/nonmetro areas had less than a high school diploma, 45 percent had a high school diploma, 30 percent had some college, and 10 percent had a college degree or more. Conversely, in urban/metro areas 10 percent of the total dislocated worker population had less than a high school diploma, 30 percent had a high school diploma, 30 percent had some college, and 30 percent had a college degree or more.

Hamrick (2002) reported that dislocated workers who sought retraining had a better chance of finding new employment than individuals who did not. Additionally, 22 percent of dislocated workers' families in rural/nonmetro areas were classified as low-income families (\$15,000 annually), while 12 percent of urban/metro dislocated workers' families were found at the low-income level. Likewise, nearly 30 percent of all dislocated workers in both urban/metro and rural/nonmetro areas emerged from the manufacturing sector (Department of Labor, 2002).

During the early 1990s, manufacturing in rural/nonmetro areas increased with U.S. exports of manufactured goods to Europe and Asia (Hamrick, 2001). However, by the mid-1990s new markets within the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R), Eastern Asia, and Mexico, along with the formation of free trade legislation such as NAFTA, fueled increased migrations of U.S. companies overseas in search of cheaper labor and higher profits. As a result,

unemployment in manufacturing climbed in rural/nonmetro and urban/metro areas. The mid-1990s also produced an increase in computer technology and Internet availability. Areas having an educated workforce were compensated by increased jobs within computer technology fields. Conversely, areas lacking necessary infrastructure and skilled workers lost jobs (Hamrick, 2001). U.S. exports of manufactured goods increased in 1998 with growing markets in Eastern Europe and China, which sparked a rebound in manufacturing. Still, cheaper labor in China, Indonesia, and Mexico continued to displace American manufacturing workers at ever-increasing rates. Additionally, computer technology production during the new millennium has started to decline with computer sales significantly diminishing, resulting in more dislocated workers. The average age of a computer in the U.S. is 1.6 years, the highest it has been in eight years (Baldwin, 2003). Gateway, the number three computer-maker in the world, has lost 20 percent of the domestic personal computer market within the U.S., and its stock has dropped 60 percent since last year (Ivey, 2003). Additionally, IBM's stock is down 30 percent and Dell Computer Corporation is barely breaking even.

The manufacturing sector traditionally accounted for the largest proportion of dislocated workers. However, by the end of the Cold War, fall of the Berlin Wall, and the collapse of communist Russia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the U.S. government began to plan for reducing federal spending by condensing federal agencies and closing military installations. The Gulf War of 1990-1991 sparked an increase in government spending, but under the Clinton administration government spending was once again reduced and more government jobs were cut. For the first time in U.S. history, government layoffs rivaled manufacturing layoffs for the largest proportion of dislocated workers (Kincheloe, 1999). The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the U.S. and the second Gulf War has generated an increase in government spending

and the creation of new government agencies, such as President Bush's New Home Land Security Agency. Consequently, employment in the federal government is currently booming and careers within this sector seem secure.

After the terrorist attacks, airline companies were forced to shutdown all flights for one week to ensure the safety of airplanes and terminals. This shutdown established new jobs within the airline industry, but they are administered and financed through a new federal government agency. The new Transportation Security Administration hired 56,000 employees comprising of: 23,000 baggage screeners, 33,000 passenger screeners, and hundreds of air marshals (Babwin, 2003). Still, these government jobs do not compensate for the thousands of dislocated airline workers.

Howland (1988) found that blue-collar dislocated workers of the manufacturing industry endured larger financial losses and longer periods of unemployment than white-collar dislocated workers in the service industry. These blue-collar workers remained unemployed for an average of 15.8 weeks longer than white-collar workers. One reason for this trend may be that white-collar workers tend to have more diversified skills, such as computer literacy and effective communication, which are demanded by industry.

The furniture and textile manufacturers still producing goods within the U.S. have an abundance of experienced workers to hire from. Thus, even those workers who find jobs within the manufacturing industry face increased financial hardships even after reemployment due to lower wages (Kane & Duggan, 1991). In addition to wage loss, many dislocated workers lose their previous pensions, health insurance, accrued paid vacations, bonuses, and seniority. Howland (1988) reported dislocated workers who found new employment received raises that equaled \$4 per week over a one-year period. However, during the same time period, sustained



employed Americans received \$17.50 per week in raises over the one-year period, resulting in a \$13.50 per week loss in earnings for dislocated workers who found new employment. Dislocated workers were found to lose \$80,000 in earnings over an individual's lifetime (Jacobson, LaLonde, and Sullivan, 1993), compared to high tenure workers, or workers with long work histories (10 years or longer), who lost up to 60 percent of their previous income (Kodrzycki, 1996). Moreover, these researchers agreed that the dislocated workers' financial disappointments occurred primarily after the return to the workforce and not during the unemployment period. One reason for this finding might be that unemployment compensation, insurance benefits, and training assistance provided under the Trade Act and Workforce Investment Act provide up to 75 percent of the worker's former income. Still, other researchers (e.g., Howland, 1988; Kane & Duggan, 1991; Jacobson, 1998; Jacobson, LaLonde, & Sullivan, 1993) have found that dislocated workers earn a lower level of income from government assistance programs or new jobs compared to their previous employment.

Traditionally, scholars (e.g., Collins, 1998; Estes, Schweke, & Lawrence, 2002; Hamrick, 2001; Howland, 1988; Kane & Duggan, 1991; Jacobson, 1998; Jacobson, LaLonde, & Sullivan, 1993) have found that older and less educated workers suffer from the effects of layoffs more than younger and highly educated workers. While the average period of unemployment for dislocated workers was eight weeks, dislocated workers 55 years and older with lower education levels, exceeded eight weeks of unemployment, while younger and more educated dislocated workers tended to gain new employment less than the eight-week period (Department of Labor, 1998). There were 472,000 workers displaced from rural/nonmetro and urban/metro areas that were 55-65 years of age. In rural/nonmetro areas, males aged 55-65 years made up 74 percent of all dislocated workers. In urban/metro areas, males comprised only 57 percent of all dislocated

workers were 55-65 years of age. Rural/nonmetro area dislocated workers between 55 and 64 years of age had 18 years tenure on the lost job, while urban/metro displaced workers had 13 years on the lost job. Additionally, older workers from both rural/nonmetro and urban/metro areas were found to be in low-skill occupations, with rural/nonmetro dislocated workers aged 55-65 remaining unemployed longer than urban/metro dislocated workers.

As older and experienced workers were laid off at increasing rates, college degree holders were also pressured, and according to Kodrzycki (1996), reemployment trends of the 1990s indicated that college degree holders did not reenter the workforce at a faster rate than non-degree holders. This supports a study by Osterman (1999) who found, “The advantage of being college educated has diminished in terms of positive reemployment effects when compared to those without college degrees” (p. 81). Nevertheless, dislocated workers who participated in adjustment or retraining services tended to have shorter unemployment periods, especially in vocational trades such as construction and service industries (Kodrzycki, 1996).

Similar financial consequences from dislocation may be gender-neutral. Osterman (1999) found that men were laid off more than women, possibly because of the population of men working outnumbered women. Researchers (i.e., Kletzer, 1998; Mathis & Jackson, 1994) found that sex discrimination in hiring practices have created difficulties for women seeking new employment after a layoff. Howland (1988) suggested that women actually found employment at the same rate or faster than men, and maintain their previous income level more successfully than men. Women earned less income than men before being laid off, but having worked in clerical positions such as data processing, these transferable skills allowed women to find new employment faster than men.

Howland (1988) also studied minorities or nonwhite populations (all nonwhite races, excluding Hispanics), and found that they suffer larger income losses than whites, and also had lower education levels that resulted in longer unemployment periods. The U.S. Department of Labor (1998) and the U.S. Census Bureau (2002) found similar results. Mathis and Jackson (1994) found that companies' hiring processes have discriminated against minorities.

In summary, no race, age, sex, or group's social status is safe from being displaced from a plant closing or company migration overseas. However, dislocated workers who are prepared will find transition to new employment easier. The next section will examine adult participation in retraining and education.

### *Adult Participation in Education*

Providers of adult education need to know who is participating, why they are participating, and what conditions are likely to promote greater participation (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Conversely, knowing who is not involved can be important information for providers and policymakers who wish to attract new learners. The U.S. Department of Labor (2003) declared that U.S. companies, during the month of December 2002, dumped 68,000 jobs from the manufacturing sector. The labor market seems to have shifted into high gear, except it is in reverse, not forward (News & Advance, 2003). With the rising numbers of dislocated workers, the demand for adult education and retraining will increase, as adults hope education programs will provide them with marketable skills that qualify them for new and sustained employment. Obviously, it is certainly helpful to know as much as possible about the clientele being served (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Past research about adult participation in education has identified two paths of inquiry: descriptive and explanatory (Nason, 1998). The descriptive path focuses on who participated,

how often they participated, determined the number of adult education participants, and calculated the correlation between variables such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, occupation, race, and levels of education. The explanatory path provided information about what influences persuaded the adult to participate in education.

### *Descriptive Research*

The U.S. Department of Education (2002) defines adult education and characterizes the adult learner:

Since the continuous pursuit of formal education is typically not considered adult education, full-time participation in postsecondary credential programs by those aged 24 or younger was not counted as an adult education activity. All other formal learning activities engaged in by those aged 24 or younger (including part-time credential programs) were counted as an adult education activity. Thus, an 18-year-old who is enrolled in a full-time Bachelor's degree program and is taking guitar lessons part-time would count as an adult education participant. An 18-year-old who is enrolled in a Bachelor's degree program and who participated in no other formal learning activity in the past year would be counted as a nonparticipant (p. 9).

Kay (1982) found that adults with higher incomes participated in education programs more than those with lower incomes, whites participated at higher rates than minorities, and during the 1970s and 1980s women outnumbered men.

Unlike Kay (1982), Valentine (1997) found that from 1969 through 1983 men were disproportionately represented in adult education. However, by the mid-1980s, women outnumbered men in job-related and non-job-related educational classes. During the 1990s, the gap between men and women participants narrowed until no significant difference between genders was found. Furthermore, younger adults participated at higher rates than older adults (54 years and older), adults with a high school diploma or higher participated more than those adults with lower levels of education, adults in supervisory or management positions participated more than those in other jobs, and employed individuals participated more than unemployed adults.

From 1969 to the mid-1990s, whites have participated more than minorities and will continue to do so in the new millennium. Aslanian and Brickell (1980) studied 1,519 adults (half participants and half nonparticipants), and found adults that participated in education to be younger, higher educated, earning higher incomes, employed, living in urban areas, white, and in high occupational levels.

Penland (1979) based a study of 1,501 adults in institutional education on Tough's (1979) premise that adult learners participate in self-directed learning as part of their everyday life. Eighty percent perceived themselves as lifelong learners in self-directed and institutional learning situations. Additionally, 76 percent of respondents had planned one or more learning projects in personal and family development, hobbies, general education, career, religion, technology, voluntary and public affairs, and agriculture.

Creighton and Hudson (2002) confirmed past studies (i.e., Johnstone and Rivera, 1965; Kay, 1982; Penland, 1979; Tough, 1979; Valentine, 1997) about adult participation in education. Participation of adults in education was low among the unemployed, high in upper-level positions, and low among adults 65 years and older. However, participation rates have increased slightly for older adults since 1991. Creighton & Hudson (2002) present the trends of adult participation in education by age, sex, race/ethnicity, education attainment level, labor force status, and occupation group:

Some shifts in participation patterns between 1991 and 1999 are particularly worth noting. First, participation rates among part-time and unemployed workers have increased enough to close the participation gap between these workers and full-time workers. At the same time, the lower rate of participation among non-Hispanic Blacks (compared to non-Hispanic Whites) has disappeared. And while men and women used to participate at the same rate, women now participate at a higher rate than men. These increases for non-Hispanic Blacks and women might be partly related to changes in their labor force status, as both groups were more likely to be employed later in the decade rather than earlier. On the other hand, some participation patterns remained the same between 1991 and 1999. Increasing participation rates among those in sales, service, support, and trade

occupations have not closed the participation gap between these workers and those in professional and managerial occupations, or between those in sales, service, and support versus those in the trades. Consistent differences in participation rates among older adults (versus younger adults) and by education level also were found in both 1991 and 1999. These differences by age, education level, and occupation group appear to be large and resistant to change (p. 20).

As Nason (1998) explained, past and current research of adult participation in education presents an explanatory analysis that provides information about what influences have persuaded adults to participate in education.

### *Explanatory Research*

The National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES) (2002) estimated that there is a total of 194,625,000 adults within the U.S. Additionally, younger adults, ages 16-24, participated in work-related learning at lower rates than middle-aged adults (35-44 years). The NCES study also proposed that younger adults did not participate in education because they recently completed their formal education, such as high school or college, and did not perceive a need for training or education. Frazis et al. (1998) also found that employers were not eager to invest in training younger workers, but more keen to train middle-aged adults in management or supervisory positions, a claim that is also supported by Lynch and Black, (1996), Industry Report, (1997), Frazis, Gittleman, Horrigan, and Joyce (1998).

In addition, the NCES study found that older adults, aged 55-64, are less likely than middle-aged adults, aged 35-44, to participate in work-related education (certifications, licenses, job promotion requirements, etc). Cross (1981) avowed that older adults were less likely to participate in work related education because of forthcoming retirement. Furthermore, the average older adult was found to have a high source of income, whether it was a pension or salary, since they enjoyed long tenures of employment in supervisory or management occupations. When the proportions of older workers, still in the workforce, were compared to

middle-aged adults, no significant differences in participation rates appeared (Creighton & Hudson, 2002).

Women participated in work-related and nonwork-related education more than men (Creighton & Hudson, 2002), because companies target women for advancement opportunities that involve work-related course enrollment. Additionally, women were found to have a greater interest in nonwork-related education and fear failure less than men. Another study supports the finding that men do not participate in adult education because of prideful masculinity, negative previous school experiences, and lack of self-esteem (Owens, 2000). Cross (1981) articulates that women are more likely to participate in education to prepare for new careers, whereas men are found to participate more in education that will advance them in their present jobs.

Hispanics and minorities (all non-whites, except Hispanics) were found to participate less than non-Hispanic whites in work-related and nonwork-related education (Creighton & Hudson, 2002). Hispanics and minorities were also found to have lower education levels compared to non-Hispanic whites. Kay (1982) and Valentine (1997) also supported this finding. In addition, discrimination, language barriers, and less occupational training were found to be issues that prevented participation of Hispanics and minorities in adult education.

Another study by Choy, Premo, and Maw (1995) found the populations of minorities and non-Hispanic whites were evenly distributed according to the percentages of total minorities and non-Hispanic whites within the U.S. Hispanics and minorities were found to make up 21 percent of the U.S. adult population, and represented 24 percent of adults 25 years and older in postsecondary education. Non-Hispanic whites represented 79 percent of the U.S. adult population and made up 76 percent of adults 25 years and older in postsecondary education. Out of the total population of adults 25 years and older participating in secondary education, 59

percent were women. Furthermore, adults 25 years and older increased their enrollment in postsecondary education by 171 percent from 1970 until 1991, while younger adult participation increased by 27 percent.

Creighton and Hudson (2002) also studied trends in adult participation. Adults employed full-time, participated in work-related education more than adults employed part-time or unemployed by layoffs or in-between jobs, regardless of age, sex, race/ethnicity, educational level, occupation group, income level, or continuing education status. Moreover, full-time workers are increasingly motivated or persuaded by labor market incentives (i.e., raises, promotions, the latest occupational knowledge, credentials, etc.) to seek educational achievements to acquire those incentives. Additionally, employers were found to be more likely to invest in the education of full-time workers because the return on training investment would be higher for full-time employees than for any other group. Research has shown that employers are more persuaded to invest in training for workers in professional or managerial jobs (Lynch & Black, 1996; Industry Report, 1997; Frazis et al., 1998). Professional or managerial jobs have higher requirements than other occupations for maintaining and enhancing knowledge and skills (Creighton & Hudson, 2002).

Conversely, the NCES (2002) found that part-time workers, unemployed workers, and retired workers participated in non-work-related education more than full-time workers, as part-time workers have more free time to take nonwork-related classes. However, some unemployed workers, such as dislocated workers or workers that have been laid off, have been found to be more inclined to take work-related classes to retrain for new occupations.

Along with lifelong learning as motivation for adult participation, life transitions have been found to influence adults to participate in education. A study by Aslanian and Brickell



(1980) presented that 83 percent of adult learners sampled had life transitions that persuaded them to participate in education. Life transitions found were: marriage, birth of children, retirement, job changes, job losses, and divorces. Therefore, adult educators, career counselors, and state officials can prepare effective adult education programs by understanding how life transitions influence adults to participate in education (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Houle (1961) also studied and attempted to categorize reasons adults participate in education by interviewing them to analyze their perceptions of themselves as learners, their past experiences as learners, and dynamics that influenced them to participate in adult learning. Three learning orientations were presented as a result of his study: goal-oriented learners, activity-oriented learners, and learning-oriented learners. Goal-oriented learners participate in adult education to attain a particular goal, such as becoming fluent in Spanish. Activity-oriented learners participate in adult education to socialize with other people, or meet new friends or members of the opposite sex. Learning-oriented learners participate in adult education in search of new knowledge or to explore subjects of interest. According to Cross (1981), “Houle does not claim that his typology is a complete or final description of adult motivations, but it is highly productive in stimulating research” (p. 83). Consequently, other researchers (i.e., Boshier, 1971, 1976, 1977; Boshier & Collins 1985; Fujita-Starck 1996; Morstain & Smart 1974) have expanded on Houle’s learning orientations.

Boshier (1971) conducted a study of adult learners in New Zealand where adult participants were asked to answer a 48-item Education Participation Scale (EPS). The author found that most adults surveyed participated in adult education for goal-oriented reasons. Morstain and Smart (1974) conducted a follow-up study of Boshier’s EPS of adult learners at Glassboro State College, New Jersey. The experiment was based on factor analysis, where adults

were asked to specify the influence that each item on the scale had on their decision to participate in the learning activity. As characterized by factor analysis, each item was connected to a factor that clarified why the adult participated. The employment of Boshier's EPS by Morstain and Smart (1974) expanded Houle's three factor typology, with additional factors found in their research:

1. Social Relationships: Participation to make friends or meet members of the opposite sex.
2. External Expectations: Participants are complying with the wishes or directives of someone else with authority.
3. Social Welfare: Reflects an altruistic orientation; learners are involved because they want to serve others or their community.
4. Professional Advancement: Participation for job enhancement or professional advancement.
5. Escape/Stimulation: Adult learners participate to alleviate boredom or escape home or work routine.
6. Cognitive Interest: Participate just for the sake of learning.

As studies have shown why adults participate in education, other studies (i.e., Cross, 1981; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982; Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985; Johnstone & Rivera, 1965; Valentine, 1997) have shown why adults do not participate in education. According to Merriam and Caffarella (1999), one of adult education's biggest mysteries is why more adults, especially those who might benefit the most, are not involved in adult education.

Valentine (1997) found 45 percent of surveyed adults complained of the lack of time to participate in work-related education, while 60 percent complained lack of money for

participation in nonwork-related education. Family obligations were recognized as a third barrier. Valentine also proposed that the external/situational barrier of family obligations was the most common among women. Men's most common external or situational barrier was found to be work demands, such as working overtime or extended work hours that prevented them from participating in adult education.

Cross (1981) and Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) also confirmed that situational and dispositional barriers exist, and further asserted that institutional barriers, such as dislike of the instructor or classmates, also exist. Additionally, Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) segregated internal or dispositional barriers into psychological and informational barriers. Psychological barriers are beliefs, values, attitudes, and perceptions about education. Informational barriers are the absence of knowledge about current adult educational opportunities. Further work by Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) expanded the typologies of situational, dispositional, and institutional barriers to six factors of nonparticipation, or Deterrents to Participation Scale (DPS). The six factors of nonparticipation were found:

1. Lack of confidence: An adult has no belief in his/herself that they can be successful in education.
2. Lack of course relevance: Adults do not perceive any practical utility of material presented or available course.
3. Time constraints: Adults lack the appropriate amount of time to attend adult programs because of their busy schedules.
4. Low personal priority: Adults do not value education as way to be successful in their lives. For example, an adult may have won the lottery and plans to party and vacation the rest of his/her life.

5. Cost: The adult's financial budget does not allow any extra income to be spent on educational programs. Cost could include more than the cost of classes, and encompass extra expenses such as childcare, gas, bus/taxi fare, meals, etc.
6. Personal Problems: Adults may have physical health problems that limit their activity outside of the home. Further, adults may have family responsibilities, such as childcare, elder care, farm responsibilities, etc.

Darkenwald and Valentine's (1985) DPS model explained which situational, dispositional, and institutional barriers persuade adults not to participate. Interestingly, not one of the six factors outweighed the others in persuading adults not to participate, but rather combinations of multiple factors influenced adults not to participate in education.

Other scholars (i.e., Benn 1997; Courtney 1992; Hall & Donaldson, 1997; Rubenson, 1998) proposed that social participation in family and community life can persuade or deter participation in education. Adults that did not participate in family gatherings or community initiatives, such as fairs, concerts, and shows, were found not to participate in adult education programs. Hall and Donaldson (1997) found that women without high school education did not participate in adult education because of negative social experiences. These women dropped out of high school because of early pregnancy, low-income levels, and parents' low education levels that provided no support in valuing education. Consequently, these pre-adult experiences were found to influence women without a high school education to decline from attending adult education as they aged.

Hispanics and minorities (all nonwhites, except Hispanics) were found to have similar negative influences that prevented them from participating in education (Davis-Harrison, 1996). Furthermore, Hispanics and minorities were found to have low levels of education, and did not

value education because of their parent's lack of, and low support of, education. These traditional views were found to influence Hispanics and minorities not to participate in adult education.

Jarvis (1985) investigated social class biases found within adult education. The white middle-class population tended to dominate adult education programs. These programs were also marketed to middle-class adults that were successful in education. According to the NCES (2002), adults with high levels of education have more disposable income to pay for adult education classes and, therefore, participate in adult education more often than their lower-class counterparts.

#### *Adult Participation Models*

According to Merriam and Caffarella (1999), "When one considers the myriad of psychological and sociological variables and the relationships between them that affect participation, it is not surprising that there is as of yet no single theory or model to explain or predict participation in adult education" (p. 60). The following are models that address specific psychological and sociological aspects that influence an adult to participate in an educational program:

*Miller's Force Field Analysis (1967)*. Miller, considered an adult's social status as reasons for participation. Adults from lower socioeconomic classes would participate for job related and basic skills, whereas participants from higher social classes would seek education to satisfy achievement and self-realization needs. Overall, the nation's poorest citizens, whether rural or urban, are least likely to participate in educational programs (Quigley, 1990).

*Rubenson's Expectancy-Valence Paradigm (1977)*. Rubenson's model analyzes how an individual perceives his/her environment and the value education will provide. The decision to

participate evolves from how an adult socializes with family, friends, or other people. The influence of others determines how the individual will perceive the value of education. For instance, an adult whose father never finished high school, but still had a successful career, may influence the adult not to view education as having any value.

*Boshier's Congruence Model (1973).* Boshier believed that the reasons why adults participated in education were developed between the interaction of internal psychological and external sociological factors. Boshier's Congruence Model predicted adult participation in education from how the individual perceived his/her learning environment. If a person felt uncomfortable socializing with fellow students or the instructor, he/she would not participate in education.

*Allen Tough's Anticipated Benefits Model (1979).* Tough developed the Anticipated Benefits Model that predicted adult participation by how the adult viewed the reward after obtaining an education. Tough argued that adults were self-directed and understood why they were pursuing an education, and for that reason external factors were not important to consider. An example would be an adult attending a class for self-enrichment.

*Cross' Chain of Response Model (COR) (1981).* Cross' COR model identified the variables that affect adults' decisions to participate in education. The COR assumes that participation in a learning activity, whether organized or self-directed, is not a single act but the result of a chain of responses, each based on evaluation of the position of the individual in his or her environment (Cross, 1986, p. 125).

An example of Cross' model that incorporates a dislocated worker's decision whether to participate or not in federally funded programs through a government agency follows:

John was laid off from the mill and has a high school education. He learns about retraining assistance from literature a government agency distributed at his company when the layoff was announced. An electrician certification course that is being offered at the local community college catches John's eye. He stops by the community college and discusses the opportunity with a program advisor. The advisor informs John he can enroll as soon as he is approved through a funded government agency program.

1. Self-evaluation (A): is one's assessment as to whether achievement in an educational situation is possible.

Example: John has a high school diploma, but believes he can be successful in the electrician program. He believes in himself because his job at the mill taught him to overcome his fear of computers through having to type daily production reports on a computer. John receives an A+ for the first stage.

2. Attitudes about education (B): attitudes about education that arise directly from the learner's own past experiences, and indirectly from the attitudes of friends, family, and significant others.

Example: John has a good attitude towards retraining. He wasn't the best student in high school, but he still made it through and feels confident that he will make it through the certification to become an electrician. However, John's wife feels that he has adequate education, and prefers he finds another job immediately.

Although John's wife influences him, her influence is not enough to change his attitude, resulting in a B+ for his attitude toward education.

3. Importance of goals and expectations that participation will meet goals (C): accesses the person's goals and whether the individual believes participation in an education program will accomplish his/her goal.

Example: John strongly desires to complete the retraining program to receive another job and to prove that he can be successful. Even though John's wife has an influence on him, it is not strong enough to diminish his self-confidence that he can accomplish his goal. John gets a C+.

4. Life transitions (D): accesses how a person adapts to new phases of life, such as losing a job, marriage, and divorce.

Example: John adapted to losing his job in good spirits and sees it as an opportunity to explore new ventures such as retraining and a new career. John's wife finally accepts John's decision, so a divorce is out of the question. With this new revelation, John gets a D+ for stage 4.

5. Opportunities and barriers (E): analyzes barriers to participating and opportunities that will motivate the person to overcome those barriers.

Example: John does face a barrier. John makes an appointment to meet with an advisor from the government agency to discuss his benefits. However, even with an appointment, John waits in line for four hours in a hot waiting room full of screaming kids with their parents. John feels disgusted, but patiently waits. As he finally gets to meet with the advisor, five minutes before closing the advisor cannot find John's acceptance for unemployment benefits, and informs John he will have to come back the following week. John tries to explain that classes start the following week, but the advisor pays no attention and leaves John in the



waiting room. John is so angry that he swears he will never deal with the government agency again, even if it means having to dig through trashcans to feed his family. The barrier is miscommunication and a lack of understanding by the government agency's personnel. John gets an E- for stage 5.

6. Information (F): discovers if the adult has access to, or has been presented with, accurate information that may provide an opportunity for the individual to overcome barriers to participation.

Example: John discovers after his visit to the government agency that the information provided by the government agency about their services was false.

The information packet said, "The government agency cares about you". What a joke, John thinks. John gets an F- for stage 6.

7. Participation (G): the final decision to participate or not. The decision is based on the positive and negative experiences the adult has faced in the prior stages. (Cross, 1986; Caffarella & Merriam, 1999). Example: The total positives (+) are four, and the total negatives (-) are two. Even though the pluses outnumber the minuses in this case, John decides not to participate because the barrier was too great to overcome.

Cross' model offers explanations of adult participation, and permits the researcher to make recommendations on how to improve participation of adults in retraining programs.

### *Cooperative Extension: Building Strong Communities*

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a product of cooperation among local, state, and federal governments in partnership with tens of thousands of citizens, who, through local Extension Leadership Councils, help design, implement, and evaluate Cooperative Extension's

needs-driven programs (Virginia Cooperative Extension, 2002). Cooperative Extension provides educational programming and leadership to communities through three general areas:

1. Agriculture and Natural Resources: Programs that help sustain profitability of agriculture and forestry production, while protecting and enhancing the quality of our land and water resources.
2. Family and Consumer Sciences and Community Initiatives: Programs that provide research-based education that enhances the quality of life of Virginia's citizens and families and supports their self-sufficiency and economic, social, and physical well-being.
3. 4-H Development: Youth development programs that allow young people from ages 5 to 18 engage in hands-on learning experiences under the guidance of 4-H agents and trained adult or teen 4-H volunteers (Virginia Cooperative Extension, 2002).

One way in which Cooperative Extension strives to improve the quality of life in rural communities is by analyzing employment trends, unemployment rates, and labor market information within the community. DeBord (1990) describes Extension's responsibility to communities:

The community and family structures of rural America are changing. These changes have implications for Extension because our programs must be based on an understanding of actual trends, not myths and false assumptions. Extension has a major responsibility to portray and communicate an accurate picture of what's really happening to families and communities in rural America (Journal of Extension, 1990).

Cooperative Extension has witnessed monumental changes, with agriculture-based communities evolving into industrialized townships. Since the founding of America, agriculture has been one of the pillars of America's economy. However, as the American economy progressed to become an industrial powerhouse many farmers found that agriculture was not providing sufficient income to support their families. Rowntree, Lewis, Price, and Wyckoff (2003) proclaimed that rapid industrialization after 1870 contributed to the shift of farm labor to manufacturing, and a century later accounted for 30 percent of the workforce. DeBord (1990) found that two-thirds of all farm families are engaged in off-the-farm employment such as manufacturing.

In recent years, Cooperative Extension has witnessed another shift within communities. Kincheloe (1999) reported that over the past twenty-five years thousands of American manufacturers have relocated to less developed countries such as Mexico, Malaysia, and Indonesia for cheaper labor. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2002), the annual average unemployment rate in the United States at the end of 2002 was 5.7%, approximately 6,742,000 people. The manufacturing sector accounted for the largest percent of dislocated workers.

Accordingly, Virginia's Cooperative Extension agents coordinate with the communities that are devastated by layoffs to determine the needs of the dislocated workers. Lasely and Korshcing (1984) found that rural unemployment is often miscalculated because federal estimates of the workforce include only those who are employed and those who are actively seeking a job. However, people who drop out of the workforce, or quit looking for employment, are not accounted for or actively pursued to determine their needs. Lasely and Korshcing (1984) insisted this has extreme consequences for community development. False unemployment rates that report the majority of the population in a community as employed presents challenges for communities to attract new businesses because of the small available labor pool. Additionally, the community does not qualify for needed state and federal funds for community and industrial development. These assertions are found to be relevant according to a study about the quality of life in Virginia. Willis-Wilson and Bayer (2001) reported that 70% of Virginians surveyed believed that Virginia was an excellent place to find a job. A closer look at Virginia's labor market reveals a different result. According to leaders in Central and Southside, Virginia, during the year of 2001 unemployment was over 10%, a ten year high. In a statement by Mayor J.R. "Rudy" Burgess of Altavista, VA, located in Central Virginia, "It was quite upsetting to hear

about the latest closing of an already hard hit town” (Sykes, 2001). Altavista was hit by two factory closings that resulted in hundreds of dislocated workers. Additionally, Southside, Virginia, has suffered job losses within the textile industry by the thousands. VF Imagewear located in Martinsville, VA, laid-off 2,300 workers during 2001 (Chittum & Allen, 2002). Sara Lee, Bassett-Walker in Chatham, and Pluma in Gretna, VA, have moved apparel labor to Mexico and laid-off hundreds (Forest, 2000). The report of the *Quality of Life in Virginia* does not represent the true feelings of all Virginians. Robin Gilbert of Martinsville, VA, said in an interview, “When will the community’s leaders generate more jobs? They are always hollering, ‘Things will get better, things will get better’. When?” (Allen, 2002).

Cooperative Extension has an important role in presenting an accurate picture of current conditions within the community. Once an accurate analysis has been conducted, the needs of the community can be determined and educational programs can be implemented.

Lasely and Korshcing (1984) gave an example of how Extension professionals in Iowa addressed inconsistencies in official unemployment rates. Iowa’s Extension staff examined an eight county region and found a discrepancy with the state government’s reported unemployment rate of 3% within that region. Local communities have been devastated by unemployment caused by declines in industry and farming. Community leaders and local citizens feared that the state government’s unemployment rate was not representative of their region. Accordingly, Extension personnel investigated the situation by conducting a needs assessment that addressed unemployment, federal assistance programs, and new employment opportunities. Iowa’s Extension Service partially funded the study, and each of the counties agreed to provide some funding and recruit volunteers to collect the data. The findings of the study are presented as follows

The sample size for the region was 2,744 households. Researchers contacted 1,861 households and received a completion rate of 67.8%. 3,733 individuals were found living in the 1,861 households. To be eligible to work in the labor force each member had to be 16 years or older. Of those individuals eligible for the labor force, 1,916 were employed, 402 were unemployed, and 1,415 were retired or disabled or, for other reasons, not considered part of the labor force. The results of this data found that the unemployment rate across the 8-county region was the 17.3%. The following formula was used to calculate the unemployment rate:  $402 \text{ (number unemployed)} / 2,318 \text{ (1,916 employed} + 402 \text{ unemployed)} = 17.3\% \text{ (unemployment)}$ . By using the same formula for the computations computed, unemployment rates for the 8 counties ranged from 14.3% to 20.2%. (Lasely & Korshcing, 1984).

These findings supported the community's concern that the official unemployment rate was not consistent with what was actually presented. The community is now empowered to attract new industry by having accurate labor statistics that showed a substantial labor force ready to work. Furthermore, the community can qualify for state and federal aid to support community and industrial development. A major result of this research is that federal funds were distributed to the locales, and two companies have announced intentions to locate within the community, creating many jobs. The coordination of Cooperative Extension, community leaders, citizens, and organizations within this example displays how future community problems can be addressed with success.

Bowling and Brahm (2002) suggest that before Cooperative Extension agents can implement programs in a community, they must understand the context of a community.

Bowling and Brahm define a community by Nozick's (1999) description:

A community is not just an economic or political system but also something deeper and more intangible, a common identity, purpose, and culture that bind people together. This essence is created through a rich interplay of the collective/social history of a place, the geographic or natural history of a place, the values that people share, and the ways that people live, work, and play together (p. 45-65).

The community is considered a constantly evolving process. Bowling and Brahm (2002), proclaim that the primary influencing factors are changes in the residents and changes in the

environment surrounding the community. When a manufacturer moves out of a community, dislocating its employees, there is profound change within the community.

Cooperative Extension's role in shaping a community is to provide educational programs that improve people's lives within the community. Bowling and Brahm (2002) recommend that Extension Educators and Agents utilize the Appreciative Inquiry strategy to accelerate the community-shaping process.

Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) explain that Appreciative Inquiry is grounded in the idea that a community or organization changes in the direction that it inquires. A community that inquires into problems will continue to find problems. Conversely, a community or organization that focuses on what it does best will continue to find more opportunities to get better and build a future where the best becomes more common.

Bowling and Brahm (2002) suggest that during an Appreciative Inquiry, a Cooperative Extension professional will lead a community through four phases:

1. **Discovering:** Extension educators interview members of the community to discover moments when citizens have been excited, energized, or inspired while living in their community. The discovery phase shifts the balance of the community's attention from what strategies are not working, to what are working, and what may possibly work in the future.
2. **Dreaming:** Extension educators conduct focus groups where people are encouraged to imagine their community as if the superlative moments revealed during the discovery phase are the norm and not the extraordinary. Members are also encouraged to speculate on ideas of how they can expand and improve their community.
3. **Designing:** Community members team together and design ways of implementing the ideas that were found in the discovery and dreaming phases.

4. Delivering: The delivery phase is where programs resulting from the discovery, dream, and design phases are implemented. Ultimately, projects that have been designed by the concerns of the community will have enormous support and a greater chance of success.

Bowling and Brahm (2002) provide examples of how Appreciative Inquiry has worked by adapting the Porch Cookie Project (PCP). The PCP was created from a fond childhood memory of relaxing on a porch and eating cookies, drinking lemonade, and talking with friends and neighbors. The goal of the PCP is to transform positive memories into community knowledge, which ultimately shapes the community. A PCP is usually held outdoors; however, in some cases, PCPs are held in homes, offices, and other enclosed locations. All PCPs consist of community members gathering and talking about their best memories growing up in the community. As these meetings are held, pictures and stories of the events are published in local periodicals to reach community members that do not attend. This helps inform the community of the rich history and makeup of the community.

Bowling and Brahm (2002) investigated the success of PCPS by interviewing three leaders of PCP events.

1. Interview one: "PCP kick-off gathering" The topic of this PCP was literacy within the community. The interviewee proclaimed that the PCP gave her hope for the future and strong relationships were formed during this initial gathering.
2. Interview two: "Business-centered gathering" Parents and children gathered at a daycare center to discuss childcare within the community. The interviewee stated that at first the parents were reluctant to interact with each other. However, the children who stayed at the daycare center introduced the parents and discussion evolved. As a

result, strong bonds were formed between the parents and discussions of trends in the future of childcare took place. Today, these gatherings are a common occurrence.

3. Interview three: “Neighborhood-centered gathering” The interviewee asserted that the major outcome of her community gathering was trust and a sense of solving problems together.

Porch Cookie Projects are a way to apply Appreciative Inquiry to bring community members together. Bowling and Brahm (2002) conclude by assembling citizens together, Cooperative Extension professionals can reshape an economically devastated community. Encouraging the population to reflect on their positive experiences living, working, and playing in a community can be a powerful tool for understanding and building healthy communities.

### *Summary*

As America’s manufacturing workforce condenses, the need for retraining and reemployment services has increased. It is important for providers of these services to understand the characteristics of dislocated workers and what motivates them to participate in retraining programs. This ensures that the dislocated workers retraining and reemployment needs are met and the community remains strong. Many studies have identified specific categories of psychological and sociological variables that explain adult participation in education. However, few studies have examined how those factors affect dislocated workers’ decisions to participate in retraining or reemployment services or benefits. This study attempts to contribute to the literature on why dislocated workers may choose to participate, and offer reasons why they do not participate in retraining and reemployment services.

Cooperative Extension has played a key role in providing accurate unemployment rates to state and federal government officials. The Extension Service strives to provide initiatives to



rebuild communities after a mass layoff. Studies have reported how Extension professionals entered into a community and coordinated with local government and community citizens, achieved an accurate picture of unemployment conditions, and proposed solutions.

## Chapter Three

### *Methodology*

#### *Introduction*

This chapter discusses the research design, population and sample, data collection, interviews, observations, validity and reliability, ethical considerations, and data analysis used in the study. A qualitative approach was selected to address the following concerns:

1. Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
2. Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose not to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
3. What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the Virginia Employment Commission and the retraining and reemployment services they provide?
4. What are the Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the MBL Foundation and the retraining and reemployment services they provide?

#### *Research Design*

Grounded theory, an established qualitative research method that was introduced by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, was employed in this study. According to Byrne (2001), grounded theory provides the researcher with strategies that can be used to build theories in areas previously unexplored or under explored. The researcher also employed Cross' Chain of Response model (COR) to derive a theory for why Lane Company's dislocated workers participated in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation, or VEC, or both, or neither organization. The COR is a seven stage model with each stage seen as a link

in a chain. As an adult passes through each stage or chain link, they are influenced either positively or negatively, which decides whether the person participates (McGivney, 1993). According to Merriam and Caffarella (1999), Cross' model is the most comprehensive model available to explain adult participation in education, because it encompasses both psychological and sociological variables that have been found to influence an adult to participate in education. Adult participation models that preceded Cross' model were generally found to address primarily the sociological factors of adult participation, such as how family and friends influence an adult to participate in education (Rubenson, 1977). Consequently, Cross' model combines previous models and includes life transitions, or how changes in life influence a person to participate in education. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) proclaim that the life transition aspect takes into consideration adult development, in particular the periods of change in an adult's life cycle for precipitating learning needs. One example of an adult's life transition could be the loss of a job. Neugarten (1976) suggests that the timing of events in an adult's life can play an important role in decision-making. Older adults that lose their job may not attempt retraining because they feel too old to receive any value from the program. Aslanian and Brickell (1980) found that 83 percent of adult learners participated in education because of some past, present, or anticipated change in their life.

Another value of Cross' model is that it is considered a tool to derive theory, which is the goal of grounded theory. Thus, Cross' model was found to be paramount for this study, and used as a tool to derive the psychological and sociological influences that persuaded the dislocated workers of Lane Company to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by MBL Foundation, VEC, both, or chose not to participate in programs funded by either organization.

The research design for this study utilized the researcher as the main source of data collection. Merriam (1998) asserts that qualitative research primarily employs an inductive research strategy, which builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than testing existing theories. From this strategy, the researcher collected data from the displaced workers' own words, through direct citations from documents, and by observing the participants to support the findings of the study.

#### *Site Selection, Population, and Sample*

The researcher determined the research site, population, and sample by following the requirements of the Trade Act of 1974 and establishing criteria for the sample. For workers to be eligible for retraining benefits after a layoff under the Trade Act, a company, or corporation, must cease its operation within the United States and move overseas. Recently, Lane Company closed its operations in the United States and moved to China, laying off 1,000 workers in Altavista and Rocky Mount, Virginia. Since Altavista was the headquarters of Lane Company for nearly 100 years and also the location of the MBL Foundation, the researcher based all research activity in this area and utilized Lane Company's dislocated workforce as the population.

The criterion for selecting the sample from the population reflects the purpose of the study and identifies the information-rich cases to study. The first criterion for the sample was that each person had to be a dislocated worker from Lane Company. Second, each dislocated worker had to be employed for a minimum of two years, so they would have a feel and understanding of the employee and corporate culture. The third criterion was that each case had to be eligible to receive training and/or employment assistance from both the VEC and MBL Foundation.

Merriam (1998) suggests qualitative research is better served by nonprobability sampling, also known as purposeful sampling. Patton (1990) supports Merriam and argues that the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases to study in depth. Contrary to this position, Henry (1990) argues quantitative research is better served by probability sampling since each member of the population has a known, nonzero probability of being included in the sample. However, probability samples are only useful when the researcher has access to a list of members in the population, and such information was unavailable to the researcher.

A nonprobability sample that represented four groups of Lane's dislocated workforce, as described in the research questions, was taken from the population that met the selection criteria (identified on the previous page). Systematically, the researcher applied the snowball sampling technique to identify members of Lane's dislocated workforce to interview. The snowball sampling technique, a nonprobability sampling design, relies on previously identified group members to identify other members of the population when a population list is incomplete or unavailable (Henry, 1990). Since the Lane Company closed its operations in the U.S., a complete list of former employees was impossible to acquire from the company. Furthermore, many of the laid off workers did not apply for benefits through the VEC or the MBL Foundation.

The researcher applied the snowball technique by contacting all key players involved in the layoff by phone and onsite visiting. Former Lane Company, Central Virginia Community College (CVCC), VEC, and MBL Foundation personnel referred the researcher to potential interviewees by providing names and phone numbers of potential participants. In some instances, the researcher was personally introduced to some potential participants while visiting CVCC and

the MBL Foundation. As potential interviewees were contacted, some referred the researcher to other potential participants.

In most cases, the researcher contacted the participants by telephone to schedule an introductory meeting to discuss the research project. Seidman (1998) states, "Telephoning is often a necessary first step in making contact, but if possible it should consist of only a brief introduction, an explanation of how the interviewer gained access to the person's name, and a decision on when to meet" (p. 40). The initial meeting with the prospective interviewee was to determine if they fit the required selection criteria and discuss the study in depth to avoid confusion and avoid any surprises during the interview, such as signing a consent form.

Seidman (1998) proclaims the rationale for an initial visit with potential interviewees

By taking the time to make a separate contact visit to introduce him/herself and the study, an interviewer is saying implicitly to the potential participants, "You are important. I take my work seriously. I respect my work and you enough to want to make a separate trip to meet with you to explain the project (p.40).

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), within criterion/purposeful sampling, the size of the sample cannot be predetermined: "The criterion invoked to determine when to stop sampling is informational redundancy, not a statistical confidence level" (p.203). Seidman (1998) proclaims, "'Enough' is an interactive reflection of every step of the interview process and different for every study and each researcher" (p. 48). Therefore, the researcher interviewed dislocated workers from each group until he received information redundancy. Informational redundancy is defined as collecting data until no new information is forthcoming from new sampled units (Merriam, 1998). Patton (1990) recommends specifying a minimum sample size based on expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon, given the purpose of the study. Therefore, the researcher interviewed a minimum of three individuals from each group to ensure that the true feelings, emotions, and perceptions of Lane's dislocated workers were based on

reasonable coverage. Seidman (1998) states that reasonable coverage will give power to the study:

“The method of phenomenological interviewing applied to a sample of participants who all experience similar structural and social conditions gives enormous power to the stories of a relatively few participants” (p. 48).

Additionally, researchers (i.e. Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; Seidman, 1998) recommend that if no redundancy is found, the researcher should draw assumptions and conclusions from the data collected. The researcher should also reevaluate the research design and recommend design changes and additional research into the area.

### *Data Collection*

Merriam (1998) states data collection in qualitative research involves three strategies: interviewing, observing, and analyzing documents. However, usually one or two methods of data collection predominates the others. For this study, the primary procedure for data collection was personal interviews. An interview instrument was developed by the researcher based upon Cross' Chain of Response model that corresponds to the study's purpose and research questions (see appendix A). The interview instrument was aligned with the research questions and presented to a panel of experts for approval (see appendix B). The purpose of the review panel was to offer suggestions to improve the quality of the interview guide. This reduced researcher bias by implementing the expertise of workforce professionals and not the researcher's opinions.

The questions were designed in a semistructured format with open-ended questions. This allowed for the interview to be guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions was determined previously (Merriam, 1998).

According to Dillman (1978), open-ended questions allow for a precise piece of information that

respondents can recall without difficulty when there are many possible answers, and listing all of them increases the difficulty of answering.

### *Interviews*

First, a pilot study was conducted on one Lane Company dislocated worker from each of the four groups. The pilot study was conducted under the same conditions and environment anticipated in the final study, served as an exploratory tool to test the interview instrument, and gave the researcher experience in interviewing and transcribing cases.

After finalizing the interview guide/instrument, the researcher collected data from the dislocated Lane workers meeting the selection criteria (listed on pages 43-44). Each interview was tape recorded and then transcribed to enable the researcher to analyze the data. Interviews were held at the homes of participants and/or Central Virginia Community College. The community college has an extension facility located within the former Lane Company Headquarters building in Altavista, and the location provided a private room, eliminating any interruptions. Interviews were held at times convenient to participants and averaged 45-50 minutes in duration. Seidman (1998) recommends that there is nothing magical about a specific length in time of an interview. However, the time should be decided upon before the interview process, and the interview should move at a pace that is in harmony with the time allowed.

The researcher conducted an interview with each participant on topics that were guided by Cross' Chain of Response Model, which represented the study's purpose and research questions. Interviewees were encouraged to elaborate on their experiences as a former Lane employee and their experience interacting with the VEC and the MBL Foundation. Interviews began with the participants answering demographic questions and then sharing their experience as a Lane employee. Questions were then asked about attitudes towards why they elected



retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation, VEC, both, or neither organization.

At the end of the interviewing process, the interviewer followed up each interview with a letter of appreciation for participating in the study. Those individuals that were contacted, but not interviewed, were sent follow-up letters to thank them for their time to meet with the researcher. Seidman (1998) claims that follow-up letters build mutual respect between interviewers and participants, and encourage participants to show up for interviews.

### *Observations*

The researcher conducted observations of the MBL Foundation's staff to acquire a sense of the services provided, and to validate comments made from interviews. The observations revealed the process of how the MBL Foundation operates and coordinates with training providers and legislative and community leaders. Observations were also made at the VEC to acquire a view of how they provide their services to the public. Additionally, visits to training providers' facilities were made to gain insight about the type of training some participants were receiving. These observations by the researcher helped to expand discussions with interviewees.

### *Analyzing documents*

While visiting and observing the MBL Foundation and its staff, the researcher analyzed documents that gave insight on the history of the foundation, the daily activities of the foundation, the people it serves, and the other organizations with which the foundation coordinates. The researcher also reviewed newspapers and magazines that have covered stories about activities of the MBL Foundation. These documents helped expand conversation during interviews by providing the researcher with knowledge about issues affecting the dislocated workers. The researcher also read documents provided by the MBL Foundation where Minnie

Lane had contacted Altavista's Congressional District representative about the issue. This information helped the researcher explore the political concerns of the interviewee and acquire their perspective about the effectiveness of current legislation for dislocated workers.

### *Validity and Reliability*

Throughout the instrument design phase, researchers must ensure that the study is well constructed to ensure internal validity and reliability (Soy, 2000). Guba and Lincoln (1981) stress that the data analysis procedures influence the validity of conclusions drawn. According to Yen (1993), validity can be very difficult to obtain in qualitative research because the researcher has the tendency to infuse his/her opinions into the study. The researcher maximized validity by completing a thorough literature review, following the principles of grounded theory, and utilizing Cross' Chain of Response Model to address the concerns of the research questions. Therefore, the researcher's opinions and biases were limited by following established and documented procedures.

Internal validity demonstrates that certain conditions lead to other conditions, and requires the use of multiple pieces of evidence from multiple sources to uncover convergent lines of inquiry (Soy, 2000). Merriam (1998) suggest that there are six basic strategies to enhance internal validity:

1. Triangulation: using multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings.
2. Member checks: taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible.
3. Long-term observation: gathering data at the research site or repeated observations of the same phenomenon over a period of time, in order to increase the validity of the findings.
4. Peer examination: asking colleagues to comment on the findings as they emerge.
5. Participatory or collaborative models of research: involving participants in all phases of research from conceptualizing the study to writing up the findings.
6. Researcher's biases: clarifying the researcher's assumptions, worldview, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study (p. 204-205).

This study incorporated all six strategies to enhance internal validity. The researcher implemented triangulation (1) by using multiple sources of data and methods to confirm findings. First, the researcher interviewed all key players involved in the layoff of the Lane employees. The researcher started by talking directly to the dislocated workers (i.e. dislocated workers who did/did not participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation, or VEC, or both; VEC personnel; Altavista Town Officials; MBL Foundation personnel; training providers; local citizens). The researcher also observed these organizations' daily activities, training sessions, and interaction of the organizations' personnel with Lane's dislocated workers. Finally, the researcher reviewed multiple documents such as newspapers, magazines, letters, faxes, and many other relevant materials that related directly to the dislocation of the Lane workers.

The researcher addressed the member checks (2) by reviewing and discussing, with interviewees, the accuracy of the findings. By having the opportunity to read the researchers transcripts, each interviewee was able to validate the results.

To address the long-term observation strategy (3), the researcher had observed the Lane situation since its announcement of closing in June 2001. Furthermore, the researcher continually maintained contact with workers, training providers, VEC officials and MBL Foundation employees since the initial announcement of the planned shutdown.

As the researcher observed the closure of the Lane facility, he also implemented peer examination (4) by communicating with colleagues, such as the researcher's doctoral committee members and former professors that shared a common interest in helping dislocated workers. The interview guide was also submitted to a panel of experts who offered recommendations for

improving the instrument. These meetings helped guide the researcher to further pinpoint the specific research questions and the appropriate research methodology.

As the study progressed, each participant was consulted about the accuracy of the findings (5). This process insured the final document represented exactly how the participants felt about retraining and reemployment services provided by the MBL Foundation and the VEC.

Researcher bias (6) was acknowledged at the beginning of the study. To minimize the impact of researcher bias, the researcher conducted a thorough literature review to acquire a full understanding of how a plant closure affects a community and, specifically, the workers. The literature review helped the researcher concentrate on the facts surrounding the plant closing.

Reliability refers to the stability, accuracy, and precision of measurement (Soy, 2000), and is defined by Merriam (1998) as the extent to which the study's results can be replicated. Reliability is problematic in social science because human behavior is never static; however, reliability can be increased if observations are repeated throughout the study. Thus, the researcher interviewed participants until the data collected was redundant.

### *Data analysis*

Glaser and Strauss (1967) emphasize that grounded theory requires the construction of theory. To formulate a theory, the researcher used a systematic coding approach. Merriam (1998) defines coding as assigning some sort of shorthand designation to various aspects of the researcher's data, so that he/she can easily retrieve specific pieces of the data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe three different types of coding presented by Borgatti (1997):

1. Open coding: identifying, naming, categorizing and describing instances found within the interview transcripts, field notes from observations, or other documents. The researcher actually reads each line and determines "What exactly does it mean?"
2. Axial coding: the process of relating codes (categories and properties) to each other, via a combination of inductive and deductive thinking. To simplify this process,

grounded theorists emphasize causal relationships by fitting things into a basic frame of generic relationships.

3. Selective coding: process of choosing one category to be the core category, and relating all other categories to that category. The essential idea is to develop a single storyline around which everything else is draped (<http://www.analytictech.com/mb870/introtoGT.htm>).

The researcher employed a combination of Cross' Chain of Response Model and the constant comparative method to code the interview transcripts. The seven links of Cross' model were determined to be the categories for coding the information obtained during the interview, because they are aligned with the researcher's purpose and research questions. The seven links are self-evaluation, attitudes about education, life transitions, importance of goals, information, opportunities and barriers, and participation. As the researcher transcribed and analyzed each recorded interview, he searched for occurrences that characterized the links by utilizing the constant comparative method.

Merriam (1998) supports the constant comparative method that was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a means to develop grounded theory. The researcher's strategy follows the lead of Merriam (1998):

The researcher begins with a particular occurrence from an interview, field notes, or document and compares it with another occurrence in the same set of data or in another set. These comparisons lead to tentative categories that are then compared to each other and to other occurrences. Comparisons are constantly made within and between levels of conceptualization until a theory can be formulated (p.159).

The researcher followed Merriam's recommendations by analyzing the transcripts of the interviews for similarities of occurrences. This process was characterized by axial coding where the researcher relates codes (categories and properties) to each other through a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning. Once the occurrences were determined, the researcher then used Cross' model to determine which link the discovered occurrences would be placed. After the occurrences had been placed, each of the links was described by a property. The following

hypothetical excerpt depicts how the researcher would analyze a Lane dislocated worker's interview transcript.

Utilizing Cross' model, the researcher was able to determine what psychological and sociological influences persuaded the dislocated workers to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation or VEC. For example, self-evaluation is a link from Cross' model. Occurrences were found in the data such as "I can do it" and "I believe in myself." From these occurrences, the property, 'confidence,' was developed that describes the link. With this information, the researcher was able to formulate a hypothesis that connects the link to its property: "Any dislocated worker of Lane Company who accepts retraining services from an organization, such as the MBL Foundation or the VEC, depended on the level of self-confidence that the dislocated worker had." This theory was constantly compared with data collected through interviews, observations, and documents.

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), and quoted by Merriam (1998), the development of categories, properties, and tentative hypotheses through the constant comparative method, is a process whereby the data gradually evolves into a core of emerging theory. Byrne (2001) states that the core usually has some of the following characteristics:

1. Recurs frequently.
2. Links various data.
3. Has an explanatory function.
4. Has an implication for formal theory.
5. Becomes more detailed.

Finally, once the researcher finished coding and interpreting the data, a comprehensive review of each case was written (see chapter 4).

### *Ethical Considerations*

Before the research process was conducted, ethical considerations were the foremost concern of the researcher. The researcher's intention was to promote a trustful relationship with all participants to produce precise, rich information without any negative impacts on the interviewees. Prior to the interviews, a statement of ethical concerns was read to each of the interviewees requiring their signatures to verify their understanding (see appendix C). The protocol of ethics assured that participation of the interviewee was entirely voluntary and their names would not be revealed. Participants were also informed that they could refuse to answer any question, and were free to withdraw from the interview at anytime. If a participant withdrew from the interview, the researcher interviewed another participant to replace the incomplete interview. All data collected became the property of the researcher, and excerpts from the interviews were part of the final research study. However, no transcripts were produced that would connect the participants to their comments. Participants were also reassured that they would be able to preview the transcripts of their interviews for accuracy. Additionally, the researcher received permission from the Virginia Polytechnic and State University Institutional Review Board for Research to conduct research on human subjects (see appendix C).

### *Summary*

The dislocation of manufacturing workers is a dilemma that researchers will continue to study for generations. Few studies have approached this dilemma from a qualitative perspective. According to scholars (i.e., Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 1998; Seidman, 1998), qualitative research seizes the opportunity to understand the experiences of people and the meaning they make of that experience. Grounded theory is a qualitative methodology that derives theory through the experiences and perceptions of human subjects.

The researcher interviewed thirteen dislocated workers and discovered why they participated in retraining and reemployment programs funded through the MBL Foundation, or VEC, or both organizations, or chose not to participate in programs funded by neither organization. Interviews were the main source of data collection, and the data was analyzed using Cross' Chain of Response Model (COR) in conjunction with the constant comparative method. The COR is accepted as the most comprehensive model to explain adult participation in education, while the constant comparative method was developed in concurrence with grounded theory as a way to compare findings within the data throughout the research process. The result of the analysis produced a rich description of Lane Company's dislocated workers' experiences and rationale for their decisions to participate in retraining or reemployment programs.



## Chapter Four

### *Results of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to investigate the decisions and perceptions of Lane Company's dislocated workforce regarding retraining and reemployment programs funded by the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation), Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), both organizations, or neither organization. The researcher interviewed thirteen former Lane Company workers who represented four groups of dislocated workers. The first group (Neither Group) was dislocated workers that did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation or VEC. The second group (MBL Foundation Group) was dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation. The third group (VEC Group) was dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the VEC. The fourth group (Both Group) was dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by both the MBL Foundation and VEC. No dislocated workers were found that were unemployed and did not participate in the MBL Foundation, or VEC, or both. The dislocated workers of Lane company were: employed and not participating in any programs; employed and participating through the MBL Foundation; not employed and participating through the VEC; not employed and participating through both the MBL Foundation and VEC.

The data and observations collected during the interviews were analyzed using Cross' Chain of Response Model (COR) and the constant comparative method. The COR model utilizes seven links to characterize what psychological and sociological influences motivates an adult to participate in education or retraining. A participant that has a majority of positive influences will be more likely to participate in retraining. A participant that has a majority of negative influences

will be more likely not to participate in retraining. However, in some cases a person may have a majority of positive influences, but a strong barrier could possibly prevent them from participating in retraining, such as a lack of money.

The constant comparative method compares occurrences found within transcripts of interviews that describe the research concerns. Occurrences are characterized by direct words or phrases spoken by the interviewee. Comparisons of occurrences lead to a property that describes the occurrences. The researcher transcribed and coded the taped interviews, uncovering rich informative responses from the interviewees. The researcher coded the data by reading transcripts line-by-line, and extracting occurrences that related to each of Cross' links. See Appendix D for a table that displays the occurrences for each link. From the occurrences, the researcher formulated a property that represents the occurrences and its link. For example, if an interviewee continually states that he/she found the MBL Foundation caring, helpful, and understanding, the property could be characterized as trustworthy. The results of the data analysis provided rationale and a description for each of the following research questions:

1. Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
2. Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose not to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
3. What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the Virginia Employment Commission and the retraining and reemployment services they provide?
4. What are the Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the MBL Foundation and the retraining and reemployment services they provide?

The following analysis presents the interviewees' similarities and differences found using the COR model. Common themes were found within each group that distinctively set them apart from other groups. Themes were also found that threaded a bond among the groups. These themes and bonds characterize the perceptions and concerns of the four groups of Lane Company's dislocated workers. The following analysis defines each link of Cross' COR Model and provides a summary of findings from the interviews. At the end of each group analysis, a table presents the total positive and negative experiences for each interviewee and their participation decision. Additionally, the table provides the property that characterizes the occurrences found within the interviews. For a more in-depth analysis, see Appendix E for specific interview questions and segments of interviewee comments.

Group I

Neither the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation nor Virginia Employment Commission Group

(Neither Group)

### *Neither Group*

The Neither Group contained three dislocated workers that chose not to participate in retraining and/or reemployment programs or services funded by the MBL Foundation, or VEC, or both. The group consisted of two female office workers (interviewees one and two) and one male production worker (interviewee three). Interviewee one was a Caucasian female in her early thirties and had been employed eleven years at Lane Company. Interviewee two was a Caucasian female in her early thirties and had been employed thirteen years at Lane Company. Interviewee three was a Caucasian male in his mid-thirties and had been employed ten years at Lane Company. All three participants qualified for retraining and reemployment benefits from the MBL Foundation and the VEC. Cross' Chain of Response Model provides a description of the Neither Group's decisions and perceptions of the VEC and MBL Foundation's retraining and reemployment programs and services.

*Self-evaluation.* Self-evaluation, the first link in the COR, describes how adults perceive themselves as being successful in education. The property that characterized this group's self-evaluation was determined to be *confident*. All of the interviewees of the Neither Group felt confident in their job skills and education. Each loved their jobs and did well in school as a youth.

Interviewee one was very proud to have worked at Lane, and perceived her confidence in her skills as exceptional. She stated that she would have retired from Lane if it had not been for the layoff. She was also found to have strong faith in God, and was confident that God would guide her in his will. Interviewee one also perceived her ability in school as high, because she had made good grades in high school and graduated from a community college.

Interviewee two was found to have high confidence in her job and education. She boasted that other departments at Lane would come to her for help in writing up reports. She felt a strong sense of confidence because the management at Lane had faith in her to accomplish clerical tasks. Interviewee two also felt a strong sense of achievement in education. She had graduated from high school and community college with honors, and recently graduated with a four-year degree.

Interviewee three perceived his confidence in his work skills as high. He was straightforward and stated that his work ethic consisted of “Giving it all you got.” Interviewee three also felt he could be successful in school because he graduated from high school. Nevertheless, he perceived work experience to be more important than education.

Similarities and differences found were interviewees one and three admitted they disliked school, but felt they could be successful. Interviewee two stated that she loved school and was a lifelong learner. Interviewee one seemed to have a stronger faith in God than interviewees two and three, because she placed his will first in her life. Although the members of this group felt they could be successful in retraining, none participated through the MBL Foundation or VEC. However, interviewee two attended college while she was working at Lane Company and paid for her own education. Thus, the variable of having *confidence* had no effect on these group members attending retraining or reemployment services through the MBL Foundation or VEC. Since each member of this group perceived themselves as highly confident, it was determined that the self-evaluation link within Cross’ COR Model was a positive influence for these group members.

*Attitudes about education.* This link in the COR describes the dislocated workers’ attitude about education and how others may have influenced their attitude. The property that describes

this group's attitude about education was determined to be *influence of family*. Family members of the interviewees may influence the interviewees to have a positive or negative attitude about education.

Interviewee one had a negative attitude toward school, but realized the importance of education in qualifying for jobs. She perceived education as time-consuming, and she had better things to do, such as helping out at church. Her husband influenced her to take a job a friend had offered her, rather than draw unemployment or seek retraining. Interviewee one's husband also considered education a waste of time. Thus, interviewee one had a negative influence within this link.

Interviewee two loved school and had positive influences from family and friends that encouraged her to attend college. Her attitude was very positive toward education, and she had earned a four-year degree. However, she felt that she was able to support herself and needed no assistance from any charitable or government organization. This belief was found to originate from her childhood, as her mother influenced her to never accept handouts. Though a very independent woman, she had a very positive influence within this link.

Interviewee three did not like school as a youth, though he did well, and had negative influences from family and friends. His father had worked his way to an executive position at Lane Company with a high school education, and interviewee three felt he could do the same. He had no intentions of attending a retraining program. Therefore, interviewee three was found to have a negative influence within the *Attitudes About Education* link.

Overall, individuals within this group were influenced strongly by family members. This influence was found to persuade them to have a positive or negative attitude toward education. Additionally, independence or lack of desire to receive charitable assistance was also found to

prevent the group members from participating in retraining or reemployment services, or programs provided by the MBL Foundation or VEC.

*Importance of goals.* This link describes the goals of the dislocated worker and whether the goals align with education. The property that characterized this group's main goal after the layoff was *finding a job independently*. All interviewees stated that finding a new job was their first priority. However, no interviewee saw a need to seek assistance from the MBL Foundation or VEC, because they were all able to find a job before working their last day at Lane Company.

Interviewee one's main goals were to seek God's will in her life, pray for other Lane employees that were laid off, find a new job, and budget her income to prepare for the layoff. Interviewee one had a negative influence within this link because she did not include seeking retraining or reemployment benefits or services as a goal.

Interviewee two was found to have goals of finishing her bachelor's degree and finding a new job before she left Lane Company. Thus, interviewee two had a positive influence within this link because she placed education as a main goal.

Interviewee three's main goal was to take care of his family and encourage them not to worry about him finding another job. He networked with friends to find a job because he did not want to draw unemployment. Interviewee three had a negative influence within this link because he did not include seeking retraining or reemployment benefits or services as a major goal.

All three interviewees of this group located a job independently of the VEC or MBL Foundation prior to their last day of work. Only interviewee two stated that education was one of her goals following the layoff. However, her independence prevented her from accepting any type of benefits from the VEC or MBL Foundation. Interviewees one and three did not place education as a goal, and thus had no need for the VEC or MBL Foundation. Thus, for dislocated



workers to seek retraining or reemployment services from the MBL Foundation or VEC, they must first have the need of their services.

*Life transitions.* This link describes how life-phases such as a layoff influences an adult to make decisions. The property that describes how the group was influenced after the layoff was *a new career*. All three interviewees presented similar trends before and after employment at Lane Company. All three graduated from high school and then entered the manufacturing workforce. The layoff influenced all interviewees to seek a job outside of manufacturing to prevent another layoff.

Interviewee one attended a community college and worked part-time before taking a job at Lane. After graduating from community college she accepted an office job at Lane. After the layoff she felt very sad that she and her coworkers were losing their jobs. Her faith in God was strengthened and she eventually found new employment. The layoff had no impact on her considering going back to school. Interviewee one had a negative influence within this link because the layoff did not influence her to seek retraining or reemployment services.

Interviewee two attended community college after graduating from high school, but could not afford to attend full-time. She applied for a temporary position at Lane and was eventually hired full-time. She continued to attend community college part-time and earned her degree. She left Lane once seeking advancement, but felt she belonged at Lane Company and returned. After returning, she was promoted to assistant manager of the Human Resources Department and pursued a four-year degree through a local university. She was determined to become an executive officer for Lane and took advantage of every opportunity for advancement. After the layoff she was very upset and struggled with new careers that could not compare to her job at Lane. However, the layoff increased her determination to finish her bachelor's degree. She is

now in her second job after Lane and a graduate of Averett University. She desires to go further in education and find a new job similar to the one she had at Lane. Interviewee two had a positive influence within this link because the layoff strengthened her desire to finish her degree, and to seek a job that can provide her opportunities for advancement.

Interviewee three did not pursue college after graduating from high school, but instead went to work in a textile factory. He liked his job in textiles, but desired to work in furniture like his father. He eventually acquired a job at Lane Company in production and loved it. He would have been happy in that job until retirement if he had not been laid-off. The layoff did not influence him to seek retraining or reemployment services. He found out from a friend about a job for a large construction company and accepted it before his last day at Lane. Interviewee three had a negative influence within this link because the layoff did not influence him to seek retraining or reemployment benefits.

Similarities of this group are that no members were influenced by the layoff to seek retraining or reemployment benefits from the VEC or MBL Foundation. However, interviewee two was influenced to finish her four-year degree, but her independence prevented her from seeking assistance from VEC or MBL Foundation. The layoff did influence all three interviewees to pursue a new career outside of manufacturing. Thus, for dislocated workers to seek retraining or reemployment services from the MBL Foundation or VEC, the layoff has to convince them that retraining is essential to finding a new job, or that by utilizing their reemployment services they will find a new job.

*Opportunities and barriers.* The fifth link in the COR describes the barriers that could prevent dislocated workers from participating in retraining and the opportunities that motivated them to overcome such barriers. The property describing this group's barrier to retraining was

*independence*. The group found new employment independent of help from the VEC or MBL Foundation. All interviewees admitted the VEC and MBL Foundation were sources of retraining and reemployment services; however, they preferred to find their own job, if possible, because they had heard rumors of bad experiences with the VEC. All of the interviewees perceived the MBL Foundation as a source for funded retraining, but not for finding jobs.

Interviewee one felt that she had a sufficient amount of education and that a job was most important. A friend informed her about a job at a local bank. She discussed the job opportunity with her husband and he influenced her to take it, because unemployment compensation would eventually run out. A few months later, her mother called her about another job 25 miles away, making more money and offering better benefits. The job was also similar to the work she had performed at Lane, but unrelated to manufacturing. She discussed the opportunity with her husband and accepted the position. She also stated barriers of going back to school were more personal. She did not like school nor to study. It was not that she disliked other students or teachers; she just had better things to do with her time. Interviewee one had a negative influence within this link because her opportunities did not align with seeking retraining or reemployment services, and her personal barriers prevented her from attending school.

Interviewee two stated that she had no job opportunities offered to her during or after the layoff. She insisted that she sought out her next job and qualified for it because of her education, experience, and skills. She also considered money to be a barrier to attending college, but received student loans to overcome that barrier. She felt that to take money from organizations, such as the Lane Foundation, would be taking money from other needy people, and that she could make it on her own. Her mother had influenced her as a youth to “make it on her own and never take handouts.” Childcare was another barrier she overcame by having a babysitter and

family help out. Interviewee two had a negative influence within this link because she created her own job opportunities by finding a job on her own and overcoming barriers independently.

Interviewee three stated that a friend offered him a job before his last day at Lane. He did not hesitate because it paid more than he was making at Lane Company and offered good benefits. Interviewee three had a negative influence within this link, because his job opportunity and independence prevented him from seeking retraining and reemployment services.

Interviewees one and three found jobs through friends, which eliminated the need for the VEC or MBL Foundation. Similarly, interviewee two located a job on her own, eradicating any outside assistance. Differences found were that interviewee one seemed to be influenced more by family in making a decision whether or not to accept a new job, while interviewees two and three made the decision on their own. Additionally, interviewee two seemed to be more independent than the other two group members, as she located a job on her own. Thus, for a dislocated worker to seek retraining assistance from the MBL Foundation and VEC, he/she must have a need for such services.

*Information.* This link is divided into two sections: *Information about the VEC* and *Information about the MBL Foundation*. The links specify if the dislocated worker has access to, or has been presented with, accurate information about retraining or reemployment opportunities. The property that characterized this group's perception of information about the VEC was *trust*. All group members had very similar responses within this link, and stated that the VEC had presented information about their benefits on Lane Company's premises when the layoff was announced. Each knew that they could receive retraining and reemployment benefits from the VEC. The interviewees also expressed concern that the VEC seminar was confusing, and that many of Lane's workers were confused about their benefits. They also stated that each had

known of coworkers and friends that had bad experiences with the VEC. Additionally, all of the interviewees agreed that the VEC could improve their services by being more encouraging, understanding, sincere, less of a hassle, and friendlier. The interviewees felt they could go to the VEC and get help, but really did not desire to if there was another option. All three interviewees had negative influences with the link *Information about the VEC* because they felt that the VEC benefits were confusing and heard about bad experiences from coworkers.

Common themes found about the MBL Foundation were positive. The group members praised the MBL Foundation for helping Lane Company's dislocated workers, and reported that they would prefer the MBL Foundation to the VEC for retraining because it was perceived as the more trustworthy organization. Each group member stated that they knew Minnie Lane, and related to her as a trustworthy person that sincerely cared about the welfare of the Lane Company's dislocated workers. No group member offered any suggestions for improving the MBL Foundation services or benefits because none of them participated. The interviewees had a positive influence with the link, *Information about the MBL Foundation*. Thus, for dislocated workers to seek retraining or reemployment services from an organization such as the MBL Foundation or VEC depends on the level of perceived trust.

*Participation:* No data is collected for this link. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee. Members from the Neither Group (interviewees one, two, and three) did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded through the VEC or MBL Foundation.

### *Summary*

Table 4.1 presents the positive and negative influences that each interviewee had within the links of Cross' Chain of Response Model. Interviewee one ended up with more negative

influences that resulted in non-participation in either the MBL Foundation or VEC funded programs. Interviewee two ended up with a majority of positive influences and actually attended college. However, her barriers of being independent and not accepting handouts prevented her from participating in programs funded by the MBL Foundation or VEC. Interviewee three ended up with a majority of negative influences, which resulted in him not participating in programs funded by the MBL Foundation or VEC.

Table 4.1. Positive and negative influences within Cross’s Chain of Response Model

Interview Groups		Positive (+) and Negative (-) Influences Within Categories of Cross’ Chain of Response Model							
Neither Group		Self-evaluation	Attitudes about Education	Importance of Goals	Life Transitions	Opportunities and Barriers	Information		Participation
							MBL	VEC	
1	Influence	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
	Property	Confident	Family influence	God’s will & Job	New Career	Independent	Pos.	Neg.	Did not participate
2	Influence	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-
	Property	Confident	Family influence	Education & Job	New Career	Independent	Pos.	Neg.	Did not participate
3	Influence	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
	Property	Confident	Family influence	New job	New Career	Independent	Pos.	Neg.	Did not participate

The Neither Group was found to have similarities that prevented them from participating in retraining and reemployment opportunities funded by the VEC or MBL Foundation. Each interviewee admitted that the VEC could help a dislocated worker find retraining or new employment. However, their perceptions of the VEC were negative because of others’ bad experiences with the VEC. Conversely, the MBL Foundation was perceived as an organization that was helping people with no hassle and sincerely cared for the well-being of Lane

Company's dislocated workforce. The underlying variable that prevented all of these dislocated workers from participating in programs funded by the MBL Foundation or VEC was that all of them found employment before their last day of work at Lane.

Group II

Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation Group

(MBL Foundation Group)



### *MBL Group*

The MBL Foundation Group represented three dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation. The group was made up of two female office workers (interviewees four and five) and one male production worker (interviewee six). Interviewee four was a Caucasian female in her early twenties and had been employed for two years at Lane Company. Interviewee five was an African-American female in her late thirties and had been employed for fifteen years at Lane Company. Interviewee six was an African-American male in his early forties and employed twenty-two years at Lane Company. All three interviewees qualified for retraining and reemployment benefits from the MBL Foundation and the VEC. Cross' Chain of Response Model provides a description of the MBL Group's decisions and perceptions of the VEC and MBL Foundation's retraining and reemployment programs and services.

*Self-evaluation.* Self-evaluation is the first link in the COR, and describes how adults perceive themselves as being successful in education. The property that described how the MBL Group perceived their self-evaluation was determined to be *confident*. Interviewees four and five felt they could be successful in education because they had made good grades in high school. The acceptance of retraining or reemployment services from the MBL Foundation or VEC depended on the dislocated worker having a high level of confidence in education. However, interviewee six had low confidence in education, but still earned his GED. Thus, for members of the MBL Group, it was found that participation in retaining was not dependent on having high levels of confidence in education, but instead could be explained by the high confidence that the interviewees had in their jobs. Interviewee six's statement, that working hard and accomplishing tasks through hard work and dedication to the task, explains why he would attend retraining,

despite a low confidence level in education. All three group members were found to have high confidence in either education and/or their job, resulting in a positive influence in this link.

*Attitudes about education.* This link in the COR describes the dislocated workers' attitude about education, and how others may have influenced their attitude. The property that characterized this group's attitude about education was *positive*.

Interviewee four described her attitude about education as a youth as carefree. She liked high school and did well, but never exerted much effort in learning. She attended college and dropped out because she was not ready. Today, she is participating in a retraining program to enter the health field, and understands that education is a very important component to qualify for a job. She also stated her family was very excited and supportive of her decision to attend school. Therefore, interviewee four had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee five claimed that she loved high school and would have attended college, but could not afford it at the time. Currently, she works full-time and attends college part-time to improve her office skills. She foresees that education will qualify her for higher-level jobs and promotions. She also asserted that her parents had a high school education, but encouraged her to go further if an opportunity was presented to her. Interviewee five had a positive influence within this link because she had supportive influences regarding education.

Interviewee six stated, as a youth he did not like school and felt that he could find a good job without it. He claimed his father had worked at Lane for forty-five years with no formal education and earned a sufficient income. However, he realizes that without a high school diploma or GED his chances of finding a job would be slim. He also insisted that he wanted his children to attend college, because in today's world one cannot make it without a college degree.

Interviewee six's wife also influenced and supported his decision to earn his GED. As a result, interviewee six had a positive influence within this link.

The MBL Group had similar responses within the *Attitudes About Education* link, and stated that education was essential to qualify for new employment. Additionally, each interviewee stated that they had positive influences from family and friends about education. The group differed by the perceived outcome of retraining. Interviewee four was attending retraining because she desired to enter a completely different occupation as a medical assistant. Interviewee five was attending retraining to enhance her office skills in hopes to qualify for future job promotions. Interviewee six attended retraining to acquire the necessary basic education to be considered for employment. He felt without a GED the prospect of finding any type of employment was minimal. Thus, for a dislocated worker of the MBL Group to accept retraining or reemployment services from the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on them having a positive attitude about education.

*Importance of goals.* This link describes the goals of the dislocated worker, and whether the goals align with education. The property that characterizes the group's importance of goals was *retraining*.

Interviewee four proclaimed her main goal was to enroll in a retraining program and locate a job with a flexible schedule that allowed her to attend the program. Interviewee four had a positive influence within this link because her main goal was to attend retraining.

Interviewee five's goal was to find a job because she felt that unemployment compensation would not be sufficient to support her family. She also desired to attend college on a part-time basis in order to work full-time to support her family. Interviewee five's goal of attending college allowed her to have a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee six's main goal was to earn his GED as he felt that without a basic education, no company would consider him for reemployment. Interviewee six also had a positive influence within this link because his goal included earning his GED.

Similarly, all three interviewees stated that their goal was to attend a retraining, and agreed that education was essential in locating a job that was comparable to their former position at Lane. As stated in the *Attitudes About Education* link the group members differed by the perceived outcome of attending a retraining program. Consequently, for a dislocated worker of the MBL Group to participate in retraining or reemployment programs through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on whether their goals consisted of retraining as the avenue to attain a new job.

*Life transitions.* This link describes how life phases, such as a layoff, influences an adult's participation in education. The property that characterizes their life transition was also determined to be *retraining*.

Interviewee four attended a local community college after high school. She dropped out of college her first semester and worked several jobs prior to her employment at Lane Company. She worked as a customer service representative for Lane Company for two years and complained about low wages. After the layoff, her appreciation for her job increased because she has not located a job that pays the same as Lane Company or offers equivalent benefits. She perceived the layoff as an opportunity to retrain for a new career in the health field. Interviewee four's influence within this link was positive because the layoff influenced her to attend retraining.

Interviewee five went to work at Lane Company after high school. She accepted a job in production and was determined to progress to an office job. Before the layoff, she had advanced

to an office position in the Human Resource Department and was on track to go further. After the layoff, she was very upset but determined to find another job with advancement opportunities. She also saw the layoff as an opportunity to attend school, but needed a job to support her family since her husband was laid-off as well. Today, she works as a database administrator in the health field and is attending college at night. Interviewee five had a positive influence within this link because the layoff influenced her to find another job and attend college part-time.

Interviewee six dropped out of high school to work at Lane Company. He was sad about the layoff and sought support from family and friends. He was influenced by the layoff to earn his GED, because he felt a job comparable to what he had at Lane would be impossible without such a degree. Today, he works as a correctional officer and claims that if he had not been laid-off, he may have never earned his GED. Interviewee six had a positive influence within this link because the layoff influenced him to see an importance in education.

The MBL Group was influenced by the layoff to seek retraining, to find a more secure job, or one that would provide them with marketable skills if they were laid off. Interviewee four is currently attending a retraining program that provides her with a new set of skills to enter a new career. Interviewee five is attending an educational program to enhance her office skills. Interviewee six earned his GED to fill a requirement for a new career. Hence, for a dislocated worker of the MBL Group to participate in retraining or reemployment programs through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended upon whether the layoff influenced them to seek retraining or reemployment services.

*Opportunities and barriers.* The fifth link in the COR describes the barriers that could prevent dislocated workers from participating in retraining and the opportunities that motivated

them to overcome those barriers. The property that characterizes the group's opportunity and barriers was *the lack of funding for retraining*.

Interviewee four perceived the layoff as an opportunity to participate in retraining. She also viewed the VEC as an avenue to provide her retraining benefits and unemployment compensation. Her barrier was money because she could not attend school without any income or funding for retraining. However, the VEC became a hassle and eventually denied her benefits. The VEC stated her retraining program did not meet the requirements of the Trade Act. The MBL Foundation provided her with complete funding for the retraining program of her choice, and helped her find a job with a flexible schedule. Interviewee four had a positive influence within this link because she utilized the MBL Foundation to remove the barriers that were preventing her from attending retraining.

Interviewee five said she learned about an office job at a medical facility from a friend before her last day of work at Lane Company. The layoff also influenced her to attend college part-time in hopes that it would provide her with career advancement opportunities. However, the lack of funding was found to be a barrier. Since she had found a job, she could not qualify for any benefits through the VEC. She heard of the MBL Foundation from a letter that was mailed out to employees and decided to investigate. The MBL Foundation has paid for all of her classes, books, etc. Interviewee five had a positive influence within this link because she utilized the MBL Foundation to overcome her barriers to attending retraining.

Interviewee six stated he had talked to friends and his wife about the possibilities of finding a new job without an education. From this discussion, he decided that there was not a very good possibility of finding a job without a GED. Prior to the layoff, he had also heard that the VEC did not pay for a GED. However, he received a letter from the MBL Foundation about

possible educational benefits. The MBL Foundation paid for him to get his GED. He actually earned his GED before he was laid-off and applied for a position as correctional officer.

Interviewee six had a positive influence within this link because he utilized the MBL Foundation to overcome his barriers to attending school.

Each of the interviewees overcame their barriers by receiving aid from the MBL Foundation. Interviewee five was actually denied funding for retraining by the VEC. Interviewee six found a new job, so she was disqualified for benefits provided through the VEC. Interviewee six had heard rumors that the VEC did not pay for GEDs, and sought funding through the MBL Foundation. Thus, for a dislocated worker of the MBL Group to participate in retraining or reemployment programs through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on whether their services helped the dislocated worker overcome the barrier of deficient funding.

*Information.* This link is divided into two sections: *Information about the VEC* and *Information about the MBL Foundation*. The links specify if the dislocated worker has access to, or has been presented with, accurate information about retraining or reemployment opportunities. The property that describes this group's perception of information provided by the MBL Foundation or VEC was *trustworthy*.

Interviewee four learned about the VEC from a meeting at Lane Company and another session at the Altavista Armory, where she signed up for unemployment compensation and retraining benefits provided by the Trade Act. However, the VEC staff treated her disrespectfully, and her overall experience with the VEC was negative. Interviewee four's attitude toward the VEC was negative due to her bad experience; therefore, her influence within the *Information about the VEC* link was negative. Conversely, interviewee four had a positive attitude toward the MBL Foundation as they helped her without any hassle and genuinely cared

about her situation. Therefore, interviewee four's influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link was positive.

Interviewee five had a negative perception of the VEC. She attended a session at Lane Company's facility and found it confusing and did not understand that there were benefits available. Friends also had bad experiences with the VEC, but interviewee five found a job before her last day at Lane so she would not have to deal with the VEC. Interviewee five had a negative influence within the *Information about the VEC* link, but had a positive influence with the MBL Foundation. She could not apply to the VEC for retraining benefits, since she had found a job prior to her last day of work at Lane Company. However, she read in a letter from the MBL Foundation that retraining benefits were available to the dislocated workers of Lane Company. She investigated and received funding to attend school part-time. Therefore, interviewee five's influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link was positive.

Interviewee six had a negative attitude toward the VEC. He said he had heard from friends that the VEC was complicated, and he did not want to experience those difficulties. While interviewee six had a negative influence within the *Information about the VEC* link, his perceptions of the MBL Foundation were positive and found the MBL Foundation to be simple and very helpful. Interviewee six had a positive influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link.

The MBL Group felt unsure about the accuracy of VEC information, but trusted the MBL Foundation because they seemed to sincerely care about the welfare of Lane Company's dislocated workers. In this group, dislocated worker participation in retraining or reemployment programs depended on how trustworthy the organization was perceived by the dislocated worker.



*Participation:* No data is collected for this link. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee. Members from the MBL Group (interviewees four, five, and six) participated solely in the MBL Foundation's retraining and reemployment services and programs.

### *Summary*

Table 4.2 presents the positive and negative influences that each interviewee endured within the links of Cross' Chain of Response Model. Interviewee four did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded by the VEC, because she had negative experiences with the VEC and she did not qualify for retraining benefits. Interviewee four participated in retraining and reemployment programs and services funded by the MBL Foundation because her perceptions of them were receptive and caring. She also did not have to endure confusing procedures and regulations. Interviewee five did not participate in retraining or reemployment benefits and services provided by the VEC, because she heard from friends that the VEC procedures were difficult. Interviewee five participated in retraining and reemployment benefits and services funded by the MBL Foundation because her perceptions of the MBL Foundation were positive, and they provided benefits that the VEC did not. She also desired to attend college part-time, but under the Trade Act a person is not allowed to work and attend school simultaneously. Interviewee six did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs provided by the VEC, because he earned his GED and found a job prior to his last day at Lane Company. He also heard from friends that the VEC's procedures and policies were complicated. Interviewee six did participate in the MBL Foundation retraining and reemployment benefits and services because his perceptions of the MBL Foundation were positive, and they provided benefits that the VEC did not.

Table 4.2. Positive and negative influences within Cross’s Chain of Response Model

Interview Groups		Positive (+) and Negative (-) Influences Within Categories of Cross’ Chain of Response Model								
MBL Foundation Group		Self-evaluation	Attitudes about Education	Importance of Goals	Life Transitions	Opportunities and Barriers	Information		Participation	
							MBL	VEC	MBL	VEC
4	Influence	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-
	Property	Confident	Positive	Flexible Job & Education	Education	Money via Lane Foundation	Pos.	Neg.	Yes	No
5	Influence	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-
	Property	Confident	Positive	New job & Education	Education	Money via Lane Foundation	Pos.	Neg.	Yes	No
6	Influence	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-
	Property	Insecure	Positive	GED & New Job	Education	Money via Lane Foundation	Pos.	Neg.	Yes	No

The MBL Foundation Group perceived the MBL Foundation as caring and provided benefits that the VEC did not. The underlying variable that persuaded these group members to participate in the MBL Foundation, as opposed to the VEC, was the flexible and less regulated benefits of the MBL Foundation.

Group III

Virginia Employment Commission Group

(VEC Group)

### *VEC Group*

The VEC Group represented four dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the VEC. The group was made up of three female office workers (interviewees seven, eight, and nine). Interviewee seven was a Caucasian female in her late fifties and had been employed eighteen years at Lane Company. Interviewee eight was a Caucasian female in her early sixties and had been employed thirty-six years at Lane Company. Interviewee nine was a Caucasian female in her late forties and employed twenty-eight years at Lane Company. This group originally consisted of three females; however, a fourth interviewee was added. The fourth member was added because the three interviewees that made up the original group stated that they knew men ages 55 and older that stated they had felt age discrimination. Merriam (1998) asserted:

The researcher starts with an initial sample for its obvious relevance to the research problem. The data will lead the investigator to the next document to be read or the next person to be interviewed (p. 63).

Following the qualitative methodology, the researcher interviewed a member of the male population that was 55 years and older. The fourth interviewee (interviewee ten) was a Caucasian male in his late fifties and had been employed thirty years at Lane Company as a production supervisor. All four interviewees qualified for retraining and reemployment benefits from the MBL Foundation and the VEC.

*Self-evaluation.* Self-evaluation is the first link in the COR and describes how adults perceive themselves as being successful in education. The property that characterized the VEC Group's self-evaluation was *confident*.

Interviewees seven perceived her confidence in education as high in a school setting, and that if she were younger she would attend college. Interviewee seven expressed that she was a

faithful Christian, and that her strength and confidence were determined by her faith. She claimed that she was a hard worker and very confident in her job. Interviewee seven had a positive influence within this link because she perceived her confidence in education and work as high.

Interviewee eight expressed she was an excellent student as a youth, but did not like school. After thirty-six years of working at Lane, she was extremely confident in her work skills. Therefore, interviewee eight had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee nine also expressed that she was an excellent student and that she would have attended retraining if she had not found a job. She felt very confident in her job and would have retired from Lane if she had not been laid off. Interviewee nine had a positive influence within this link, because she had very high confidence in her job skills and education.

Interviewee ten felt that his confidence in education was low because he had made meager grades in high school. However, his confidence was high within his job at Lane. Interviewee ten's confidence was high in his job and low in education. Thus, he had no desire to attend retraining and had a negative influence within this link.

Within the VEC Group, participation in the VEC reemployment services and programs was not found to be dependent on the dislocated worker having a high self-confidence in education or his/her job. These dislocated workers felt they had sufficient work skills and did not need to attend retraining, but needed assistance in seeking reemployment. Interviewees seven and eight felt confident in their work skills and education, but desired to retire. Interviewees nine and ten felt that they had the appropriate skills to locate a job, but needed help finding placement in a new job.

*Attitudes about education.* This link in the COR describes the dislocated workers' attitude about education and how others may have influenced their attitude. The property that characterizes this group's attitude about education was *negative*.

Interviewee seven described her attitude about education as very serious and was never satisfied unless she made an 'A.' She did not attend college, but perceived that she could be successful if she attended. Education was important to interviewee seven and she admitted that young people today need a degree to find a good job. Interviewee seven believed she was too old to attend retraining, but still had a positive attitude toward education. Thus, she had a positive influence within the *Attitudes about education* link.

Interviewee eight felt that her education as a youth was insignificant because she never applied it during her career. Interviewee eight also had negative influences from her parents, as they encouraged her to find a job after graduation from high school. She felt that experience should be considered more important than education when qualifying for a job and felt she was too close to retirement to attend retraining. Interviewee eight had a negative influence within this link because she did not value education.

Interviewee nine stated that she loved school as a youth and attended many training seminars at Lane Company. She also stated that she would have enrolled in retraining if she had not found a job first. Interviewee nine felt that a degree was essential to qualifying for jobs in today's competitive economy. The influences from family and friends were positive, and her husband encouraged her to pursue retraining if she so desired. Interviewee nine had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee ten had a negative attitude about education in that as a youth he did poor in school, but liked socializing and participating in school sports, since his parents instilled in him

that working to support the family was more important than pursuing an education. He also felt that he was too old to attend a retraining program. Thus, interviewee ten did not value education and had a negative influence within this link.

This group was divided on their attitudes about education. These findings suggest that the attitude about education was a factor in the decision to participate in education, but personal beliefs about themselves and priorities were more important. Thus, for any dislocated worker of the VEC Group to attend retraining depended on how the dislocated workers perceived themselves, and if they could find a job without attending retraining.

*Importance of goals.* This link describes the goals of the dislocated workers and whether their goals align with education, and was determined to be *unemployment compensation*.

Interviewee seven stated that finding God's will and helping her son after the death of his wife was her main goal. She also felt that she could actually manage without unemployment compensation, because her husband earned enough income to support both of them. Interviewee seven had a negative influence within this link, because she did not place seeking retraining or reemployment services as a major goal.

Interviewee eight stated that her first goal was to receive unemployment compensation and insurance after the layoff. She also stated that taking care of her ailing mother was a major goal. Interviewee eight had a positive influence within this link, because she placed seeking reemployment services as a major goal.

Interviewee nine stated that her goal was to draw unemployment compensation and look for a new job. She would have sought retraining if a new job did not become available at the end of her unemployment duration. However, drawing unemployment and job searching was found to be a more important goal than retraining. Consequently, interviewee nine had a positive

influence within this link, because she placed seeking reemployment services as a major goal, and depended on the VEC to accomplish that goal.

Interviewee ten stated that his goal was to receive unemployment compensation and find a job because he was not quite old enough to retire. Thus, interviewee ten had a positive influence within this link.

Since none of the interviewees placed retraining as a major goal, none attended retraining. However, all of them placed some type of reemployment service as a priority. Thus, for a dislocated worker of the VEC Group to attend reemployment services from an organization such as the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on whether their goals were to receive unemployment compensation or to find a new job. To receive unemployment compensation, an individual has to actively seek two jobs per week and provide proof to the VEC. The MBL Foundation stated that it would do anything to help a Lane Company dislocated worker find a new job primarily through funding for retraining, as opposed to job search assistance.

*Life transitions.* This link describes how life-phases influence an adult's decisions and *compensation* describes this group's life transition.

Interview seven stated that she only drew unemployment because she wanted something out of the layoff and not because she needed it, seriously looking for a new job, nor planning to attend retraining. Interviewees seven had no desire to reenter the workforce, but desired to retire and help her family. Therefore, interviewee seven had a negative influence within this link.

Interviewee eight did not desire to return to the workforce or attend retraining and sought unemployment compensation to carry her over to retirement in four months. Since she was not influenced by the layoff to attend retraining, interviewee eight had a negative influence within this link.



Interviewee nine stated that the layoff influenced her to seek another job through the VEC and was planning to attend retraining if she could not find another job. Though interviewee nine found another job through the VEC and did not attend retraining, she did contemplate retraining as a result of the layoff. Thus, she had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee ten felt depressed after the layoff, because he was not able to retire and receive Social Security. He never contemplated retraining, but desired to receive unemployment compensation until he could locate a new job. Interviewee ten had a negative influence within this link.

The life transition of the layoff did not influence interviewee seven (56 years old), interviewee eight (61 years old), or interviewee ten (58 years old) to seek retraining. The layoff did influence interviewee nine (47 years old) to consider attending a retraining program, but she found a new job first. The layoff influenced all of the group members to seek unemployment compensation and reemployment services. The MBL Foundation was perceived by this group to be an option for people seeking retraining, so no group member attempted to seek any help from that organization. In this case, the layoff influenced them to seek reemployment services and monetary benefits.

*Opportunities and barriers.* The fifth link in the COR describes the barriers that could prevent the dislocated worker from participating in retraining, and the opportunities that motivated him/her to overcome such barriers. The property that describes this link was determined to be *age*.

Interviewee seven perceived the layoff as God's will so she could help her son. She also drew unemployment from the VEC, but stated that unemployment compensation or utilizing the VEC to find a job was not important. In fact, she delayed her unemployment compensation

because she had to help her son for a long period of time, making it impossible to look for jobs. Interviewee seven had a negative influence within this link because her barriers of perceiving herself as too old to attend retraining, helping her son, and her husband's substantial income, was not overcome by the services of the VEC or MBL Foundation.

Interviewee eight considered the VEC as an important opportunity to have an income to carry her over to retirement. She had no desire to attend retraining, because she perceived herself as too old and did not value education. Thus, interviewee eight had a negative influence within this link

Interviewee nine stated that if she had not found a job, she would have definitely attended retraining through the VEC and/or MBL Foundation. She stated that both organizations would have helped her overcome the barrier of the lack of funding for retraining. Therefore, interviewee nine had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee ten stated that the VEC was his only opportunity to have an income when he was laid off. Although the VEC offered him an opportunity to receive an income and attend retraining, interviewee ten felt too old and had no intentions of attending retraining. Since the VEC and the MBL Foundation offered no opportunity to overcome his age barrier, interviewee ten had a negative influence within this link

Interviewees seven, eight, and ten stated that age was a major barrier to attending retraining. Unfortunately, this barrier was not overcome by any opportunities. Interviewee nine did not perceive herself as too old for retraining, but felt she had enough experience to find a job. Thus, for any member of the VEC Group to attend retraining or reemployment programs or services provided through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depends on the dislocated worker's age.

*Information*. This link, *Information about the VEC* and *Information about the MBL Foundation*, specifies if the dislocated worker has access to, or has been presented with, accurate information about retraining or reemployment opportunities. *Relevant* is the property that describes the group's perception of this link.

Interviewee seven described her experience with the VEC as positive and found them helpful and easy to deal with, but disliked the long lines. Interviewee seven also had a positive attitude toward the MBL Foundation. She stated that the MBL Foundation was wonderful, and was aware that funding was available for retraining. Thus, interviewee seven had a positive influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link.

Interviewee eight stated that she expected to wait in line, and that it was no problem, had a positive experience with the VEC. She felt their procedures were not complicated, but that some people may have difficulty. Interviewee eight had a positive influence within the *Information about the VEC* link. Interviewee eight also had a positive view of the MBL Foundation. She read about people who were going to school and thought retraining was a good idea. Interviewee eight had a positive influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link.

Interviewee nine had a negative influence within the *Information about the VEC* link. She did perceive their system as positive, but their rudeness was enough to influence her to have a negative impression. Her perceptions of the MBL Foundation were positive as they helped people and genuinely cared about the Lane workers. Interviewee nine had a positive influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link.

Interviewee ten had a negative view of the VEC, and a negative influence within the *Information about the VEC* link. He perceived the VEC as discourteous and unhelpful and felt

they should have been friendlier and more understanding to individuals that had just lost their jobs. Similar to all the other group members, he had a positive perception of the MBL Foundation. He stated that the retraining and the provision of computers to Lane workers who wanted to attend retraining was commendable. He also knew Mr. and Mrs. Lane and thought they were sincere in serving their community. Interviewee ten had a positive influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link.

All VEC Group members stressed that accurate information pertaining to their needs was foremost in their decision to participate in retraining or reemployment programs. Since the MBL Foundation was perceived as a source for retraining assistance, the members of the VEC Group did not seek reemployment assistance from the MBL Foundation. However, all of the group members perceived the MBL Foundation as a caring organization that was striving to help Lane Company's dislocated workers pay for retraining. Thus, for any dislocated worker of the VEC Group to participate in retraining or reemployment programs or services depends on the information being relevant to their needs.

*Participation:* No data is collected for this link. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee. Members from the VEC Group (interviewees seven, eight, nine, and ten) only participated in reemployment programs funded through the VEC.

### *Summary*

Table 4.3 presents the positive and negative influences that each interviewee had within the links of Cross' Chain of Response Model. Interviewee seven did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation, because she had perceived herself as too old to attend retraining, and helped her son after the death of his wife. However, she did value education and thought it was essential for a young person to acquire a good job.

Interviewee eight did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation because she perceived herself as too old to go back to school and felt experience as superior to education when qualifying for employment. She had a majority of negative influences within the COR that resulted in her decision not to participate in retraining, but she did receive unemployment compensation through the VEC and perceived them as helpful and enjoyable to work with.

Interviewee nine did not participate in the MBL Foundation because she found a new job, but would have attended retraining if she had not located employment. She had a majority of positive influences within the COR, but still did not participate in retraining. Interviewee nine also received unemployment compensation through the VEC, and claimed she had no problems understanding her benefits. She proclaimed the VEC was very rude and faulted her for having been laid-off, but the benefit of unemployment compensation outweighed the discourteous nature of the VEC.

Interviewee ten did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation because he perceived himself as too old to attend retraining. As a youth, interviewee ten did not do well in school and had to help his family on the farm. He also perceived education was overrated and that experience was the best way to qualify for a job. Interviewee ten was found to have a majority of negative influences within the COR that resulted in his decision not to participate in retraining.

Table 4.3. Positive and negative influences within Cross' Chain of Response Model

Interview Groups		Positive (+) and Negative (-) Influences Within Categories of Cross' Chain of Response Model								
VEC Group		Self-evaluation	Attitudes about Education	Importance of Goals	Life Transitions	Opportunities and Barriers	Information		Participation	
							MBL	VEC	MBL	VEC
7	Influence	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+
	Property	Confident	Valued, but Too old	Family	God's will to help son	Age and Family Responsibility	Pos.	Pos.	No	Yes
8	Influence	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	+
	Property	Confident	No value & Too old	Unemployment Compensation	Retirement	Age and Family Responsibility	Pos.	Pos.	No	Yes
9	Influence	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
	Property	Confident	Positive	Reemployment and Retraining Benefits	Reemployment and Retraining Benefits	Reemployment via VEC	Pos.	Neg.	No	Yes
10	Influence	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+
	Property	Confident	No value & Too old	Reemployment Benefits	Reemployment Benefits	Age and VEC did not find him a job	Pos.	Neg.	No	Yes

All four interviewees perceived the MBL Foundation as warm and sincerely caring for their community. However, the interviewees observed that the MBL Foundation did not offer unemployment compensation, but only funding for retraining. The underlying variable that persuaded these group members to participate in the VEC was not to seek retraining seriously, but to draw unemployment to support their families.

Group IV

Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation and Virginia Employment Commission Group

(Both Group)

### *Both Group*

The Both Group represented three dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and VEC. The group consisted of one male project administrator (interviewee eleven), one female department manager (interviewee twelve), and one female office worker (interviewee thirteen). Interviewee eleven was an African-American male in his fifties and had been employed for thirty years at Lane Company. Interviewee twelve was a Caucasian female in her forties and had been employed thirteen years at Lane Company. Interviewee thirteen was a Caucasian female in her twenties and employed two years at Lane Company. All three participants qualified for retraining and reemployment benefits from the MBL Foundation and the VEC. Cross' Chain of Response Model provides a description of the Both Group's decisions and perceptions of the VEC and MBL Foundation's retraining and reemployment programs and services.

*Self-evaluation.* Self-evaluation is the first link in the COR and describes how adults perceive themselves as being successful in education. The property that characterized this group's self-evaluation was determined to be *confident*.

Interviewee eleven was very confident in his job at Lane and education, since he implied that he loved his job, attended college, and strived to be the best in both, but his influence within this link was positive.

Interviewee twelve had strong confidence in her job at Lane and education. She had been promoted to manager in every job that she held, and earned a 4.0 grade point average in school. Interviewee twelve also had a positive influence within this link.



Interviewee thirteen was confident in her job and was not afraid of a challenge. She is a hard worker who studied diligently, and did very well in school. Likewise, she had a positive influence within the *Self-evaluation* link.

The members of the Both Group had high levels of confidence in education and had been excellent students in high school. Thus, for any member of the Both Group to attend retraining or reemployment programs, or services funded by the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on the dislocated worker having high confidence in education.

*Attitudes about education.* This link in the COR describes the dislocated workers' attitude about education and how others may have influenced their attitude. The property that characterized this group's attitude about education was *positive*.

Interviewee eleven stated he had taken every opportunity that Lane provided to acquire an education, as a result of his mother's influence to excel in everything he attempted. He attended three supervisor programs and now is working on his four-year degree. Feeling that education will provide him with knowledge and experience to bring excellence to a company, his influence within this link was positive.

Interviewee twelve did not attend many training programs at Lane, but often trained her workers. She also attended two retraining programs since the layoff, showing she valued education, but felt that her work experience is superior. Interviewee twelve's influence within the *Attitudes about Education* link was positive.

Interviewee thirteen stated that she was trained for her job and did not participate in other programs through Lane Company. She also proclaimed that she is attending a paramedic-training program in hopes of acquiring a flexible schedule and competitive salary. Her positive attitude

about education and positive influences from her family gave her a positive influence within this link.

For any member of the Both Group to attend retraining or reemployment programs, or services provided through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on a positive attitude toward education.

*Importance of goals.* This link describes the goals of the dislocated worker and whether the goals align with education. The property that characterized this group's main goal after the layoff was *retraining*.

Interviewee eleven was the only group member seeking his four-year degree, where interviewee twelve and thirteen were seeking two-year degrees. His main goal was to go back to school and finish his four-year degree, but his major barrier was lack of funding. He overcame this barrier through utilizing both the VEC and MBL Foundation, so he had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee twelve stated that returning to school was a more personal goal. She really did not attend in hopes of qualifying for a better job, but to prove to herself that she could be successful in college. Her major barrier to attending was the lack of funding, and the VEC and MBL Foundation funds overcome that barrier. Interviewee twelve's influence within this link was positive.

Interviewee thirteen's main goal was to attend a retraining program to qualify for a stable job that would not lay her off. Her barrier was also a lack of funding that was overcome by receiving assistance from the VEC and MBL Foundation. Interviewee thirteen's influence with this link was found to be positive.

The interviewees of the Both Group were found to place retraining as their first goal after the layoff. Thus, to attend retraining or reemployment programs or services depended on the dislocated workers having the main goal of retraining.

*Life transitions.* This link describes how life phases, such as a layoff, influences an adult to make decisions, and the property that characterized this group was determined to be *retraining*.

Interviewee eleven had a positive outlook after the layoff. He saw it as an opportunity to pursue his four-year degree and encouraged others to take advantage of the retraining benefits. Interviewee eleven proclaimed that his faith in God helped him to persevere after the layoff. Today, interviewee eleven is pursuing his four-year degree, and has secured a position with a small stained glass company after he graduates. By attending college, interviewee eleven had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee twelve was very sad, but found herself motivating her department to carry on and do the best job they could until their last day. The layoff influenced her to seek a career that she had always dreamed about in floral design. After the layoff, interviewee twelve approached the VEC to attend the retraining program. However, the VEC said that the retraining program did not meet the requirements under the Trade Act. She returned home sad and unmotivated to attend a retraining program. She nevertheless approached the MBL Foundation and they funded the program. After she graduated from the floral design program, she was motivated to attend a program through the VEC. Interviewee twelve's influence within this link was positive.

Interviewee thirteen was found to be quite happy after the layoff since it was her opportunity to make her dream of returning to school come true. She had always wanted to finish her degree, but with children, found it impossible. Interviewee thirteen also tried to motivate

older Lane employees who felt they were too old to go back to school or find another job.

Interviewee thirteen had a positive influence within this link.

Members of the Both Group stated the layoff influenced them to seek retraining in order to acquire marketable skills for new employment. Therefore, for any member of the Both Group to attend retraining or reemployment programs, or services provided through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on the dislocated worker being directly influenced by the layoff to seek retraining for a new job.

*Opportunities and barriers.* The property that characterizes the fifth link describes the barriers that could prevent the dislocated worker from participating in retraining, and the opportunities that motivated them to overcome those barriers, was *money*.

Interviewee eleven felt that the layoff was an opportunity to get his four-year degree. Money would have been a barrier if not for the VEC and MBL Foundation. He also stated that many of his family and friends would try to persuade him that school was going to be hard and he would never find a job like he had at Lane. However, through his faith in God he was able to overcome those negative influences and maintain his positive outlook on life. Interviewee eleven had a positive influence within this link.

Interviewee twelve claimed that money would have been her biggest barrier, but the VEC and MBL Foundation paid for her to attend school. She also said Furniture Brands International offered her a job in Mississippi and would have accepted, but her family was not interested in moving. Interviewee twelve's influence within this link was positive.

Interviewee thirteen stated she saw the layoff as the opportunity of a lifetime to attend retraining and receive compensation at the same time. The layoff enabled her to qualify for

unemployment compensation and funding for school through the VEC and MBL Foundation. Therefore, interviewee thirteen had a positive influence within this link.

The Both Group pursued retraining through both the MBL Foundation and the VEC. Thus, for any member of the Both Group to attend retraining or reemployment programs, or services provided through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on the dislocated worker having the need for funding.

*Information.* This link is divided into two sections: *Information about the VEC* and *Information about the MBL Foundation*. The links specify if the dislocated worker has access to, or has been presented with, accurate information about retraining or reemployment opportunities. The property that characterized this group's perception of information was *reputable*.

Interviewee eleven had a very good experience with the VEC, and claimed that he made the extra step to establish a relationship with one individual there. He stated that he believed the VEC meant well, but they did not present the information clearly or helped the Lane workers enough. He felt that if he did not take the extra step on his own, he would not have been able to receive all of his benefits. Interviewee eleven had a positive influence within the link, *Information about the VEC*, because he perceived them as very helpful. Interviewee eleven also had a positive influence within the link, *Information about the MBL Foundation* and felt the MBL Foundation was a better opportunity than the VEC, because there was no hassle or complicated procedures involved.

Interviewee twelve claimed that because of her experience of a previous layoff, she was able to understand her benefits. Since the VEC staff was perceived as rude and made her feel as if it were her fault that she had been laid-off, she had a negative influence within the link *Information about the VEC*. Conversely, interviewee twelve had a positive influence within the

link *Information about the MBL Foundation*. Even though she praised the MBL Foundation, and stated they were caring and their procedures were less complicated than those of the VEC, she felt that their trouble-free system would leave them vulnerable to abuse.

Interviewee thirteen had a negative experience with the VEC, and stated they did not care about the workers of Lane. She recommended that they should have better accommodated the needs of the people who lost their jobs through clearer communication about benefits. Thus, interviewee thirteen had a negative influence within the link *Information about the VEC*.

Interviewee thirteen had no complaints about the MBL Foundation, and she felt that they cared about her welfare. She also stated that people may abuse the MBL Foundation's services, but felt since they did have a list of Lane workers, it would be difficult to do so. Her optimistic view of the MBL Foundation, gave her a positive influence within the *Information about the MBL Foundation* link.

Similarly, the interviewees of the Both Group stated that the VEC had provided information about retraining and reemployment, but expressed concerns that the presentation was confusing and the staff was rude and uncaring. In spite of these concerns about the VEC's policies, they felt confident since it was a government-supported institution, benefits would be provided. The interviewees also stated that information about the MBL Foundation was mainly spread by word of mouth. Each interviewee knew Minnie Lane and felt that she sincerely cared for the workers of Lane Company. In this group, participation in retraining, or reemployment programs through the MBL Foundation or VEC, depended on how reputable the organization was perceived by the dislocated worker.

*Participation:* No data is collected for this category. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee. Members of the Both Group (interviewees eleven, twelve, and thirteen) participated in programs funded through both the MBL Foundation and VEC.

*Summary*

Table 4.4 presents the positive and negative influences that each interviewee had within the links of Cross' Chain of Response Model. Members of the Both Group were found to have a majority of positive influences within the COR that led to participation in both the VEC and MBL Foundation funded retraining and reemployment programs.

Table 4.3. Positive and negative influences within Cross' Chain of Response Model

Interview Groups		Positive (+) and Negative (-) Influences Within Categories of Cross' Chain of Response Model							
Both Group		Self-evaluation	Attitudes about Education	Importance of Goals	Life Transitions	Opportunities and Barriers	Information		Participation
							MBL	VEC	
11	Influence	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Property	Confident	Positive	Education	Retraining	Money	Pos.	Pos.	Participated
12	Influence	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+
	Property	Confident	Positive	Education	Retraining	Money	Pos.	Neg.	Participated
13	Influence	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+
	Property	Confident	Positive	Education	Retraining	Money	Pos.	Neg.	Participated

The underlying variable that persuaded these dislocated workers to participate in the MBL Foundation and VEC was that all of them needed a more than one source of money to pay for their retraining. The VEC was found not to compensate for all of their expenses, but the MBL Foundation would pay for any expense the VEC did not.

## *Chapter Summary*

The findings suggest that the dislocated workers of Lane Company had many concerns regarding retraining and reemployment programs. The interviewees presented a distant connection with the VEC that led to a negative perception of their programs and services. However, the dislocated workers perceived the MBL Foundation as a sincere provider of retraining services. Each group's motive for participating in retraining and reemployment programs and services distinctively set them apart. Dislocated workers of the MBL Group participated in programs funded by the MBL Foundation, because they desired to work and attend retraining simultaneously. Members of the VEC Group participated in programs funded by the VEC, because they perceived the organization as the sole provider of services that were relevant to their needs. These dislocated workers only desired to receive unemployment compensation until they could find reemployment or retired. Dislocated workers of the Both Group participated in programs funded by both organizations because the Trade Act did not provide sufficient funding to cover all expenses. Finally, the members of the Neither Group did not participate in either group, but found employment before their last day of work at Lane, thus eliminating the need for retraining and reemployment programs or services.

What is most compelling about the findings is how the dislocated workers prided themselves as part of a family of Lane Company workers. Their outlook toward the future did not exhibit despondency, but strong confidence in their skills. All interviewees felt they had work skills that would make them successful in other jobs. However, some desired to enhance their skills with retraining. These findings display the strong will of community citizens in times of despair.



## Chapter Five

### *Summary, Discussion, and Recommendations*

This chapter presents the conclusions from a qualitative analysis of the data, encompassing the recapitulation of the purpose and research questions that grounded the study. A discussion of implications and recommendations for future research and practice are also presented.

#### *Summary*

The purpose of this study was to investigate the decisions and perceptions of Lane Company's dislocated workforce regarding retraining and reemployment programs funded by the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation), Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), both organizations, or neither organization. The following questions were addressed:

- 1) Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
- 2) Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose not to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC?
- 3) What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the Virginia Employment Commission and the retraining and reemployment services it provides?
- 4) What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the MBL Foundation and the retraining and reemployment services it provides?

#### *Discussion*

Chapter four presented how each interviewee fared within Cross' Chain of Response Model (COR). Chapter five attempts to present an overall discussion of how each group fares within the COR to answer the research questions. In Table 5.1, the researcher characterizes how

the groups perceive the links within the COR. Table 5.1 also displays the theories/rationale for their decisions formulated by the overall perceptions of the groups. From each of the group theories in Table 5.1, one can conclude four general theories that expand to dislocated workers within the United States.

- 1) Dislocated workers who desire to work and attend retraining simultaneously will seek an alternative to state employment commissions or the Trade Act.
- 2) Dislocated workers who desire to obtain compensation and job placement will seek aid through state employment commissions.
- 3) Dislocated workers who participate in retraining programs will often find that government funding is not sufficient in covering program expenses and will seek funding from additional sources.
- 4) Dislocated workers who have family influences that persuade them to be independent will not seek retraining or reemployment services from government agencies or nonprofit organizations unless they are forced to.

Table 5.1. Group Participation Theories Derived by Cross' Chain of Response Model

Group and Theory	Cross' Chain of Response Model						
	Self- Evaluation	Attitudes about Education	Importance of Goals	Life Transitions	Opportunities and Barriers	Information	Participation
MBL Group	High confidence in education and occupational skills.	Positive attitude toward education.	Goal was retraining.	Layoff influenced the group to seek retraining.	Money was the barrier. MBL provided funding for any type of retraining.	MBL Foundation was perceived as trustworthy.	Participated in only the MBL Foundation.
Theory	<i>The MBL Group decided to participate in retraining programs funded by the MBL Foundation because they provided funding for any retraining program and continued funding after the dislocated worker found a job, whereas the VEC did not.</i>						
VEC Group	High confidence in work skills. Group placed occupational skills ahead of education.	Negative attitude toward education. Group felt work experience was more important.	Goal was new employment.	Layoff influenced group to seek unemployment compensation.	Group perceived themselves as too old to retrain.	VEC seemed more relevant to provide for their need of unemployment compensation.	Participated in only the VEC.
Theory	<i>The VEC Group participated in reemployment programs funded through the VEC because they only desired to find a new job or retire.</i>						
Both Group	High confidence in education and occupational skills.	Positive attitude toward education.	Goal was retraining.	Layoff influenced the group to seek retraining.	Money was the barrier. Both MBL and VEC were perceived as valid.	Both MBL and VEC were perceived as reputable.	Participated in both MBL Foundation and VEC.
Theory	<i>The Both Group participated in both the MBL Foundation and the VEC because under the Trade Act funding was insufficient and program policies were restrictive.</i>						
Neither Group	High confidence in education and occupational skills.	Positive attitude, but influence of family prevented seeking retraining.	Goal was to find a job before being laid-off.	Layoff influenced group to seek a non-manufacturing career.	Group found jobs independent of the MBL or VEC.	MBL Foundation was perceived as trustworthy.	Did not participate in the MBL Foundation or VEC.
Theory	<i>The Neither Group decided not to participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation or VEC because the group members were found to be highly independent and found new employment before their last day of work at Lane Company.</i>						

*Research question one.* Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC? (Illustrated in Table 5.1)

*Minnie and B. B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation Group)*

The MBL Group desired to work and attend retraining concurrently. The interviewees perceived the MBL Foundation as positive, caring, and providing benefits that the VEC did not. The flexible and less regulated benefits of the MBL Foundation persuaded the dislocated workers to participate in the MBL Foundation and not the VEC.

This concept of flexible and less restrictive policies to encourage adult participation is not a new idea. Scholars (e.g., Cross, 1986; Brown, 2003; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999) agree that adults may not participate in programs that have complex and/or restrictive procedures. Under the Trade Act, a dislocated worker cannot work and receive funding for retraining. Accordingly, the VEC may need to reevaluate its policies and procedures for dislocated workers.

An interesting finding within the MBL Group is that participation in retraining is not dependent on having high levels of confidence in education, but instead could be explained by the high confidence that the interviewees have in their occupational skills. This finding is interesting, because scholars Pintrich and Schunk (1996) found that individuals with low confidence in education do not participate in retraining programs. However, Imel (1994) found adults that have high confidence in accomplishing job tasks may transfer that confidence to participating in education. Additionally, interviewee six of the MBL Group perceived his confidence in education as low, but recognized a need to earn a GED to ensure new employment. When adults perceive a need to learn, they are motivated to work very hard until the task is accomplished (Imel, 1994; Cross, 1986; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Members of the MBL Group were also confused about the types of retraining programs offered through the VEC. Interviewee six recognized the need for additional education and desired to earn a GED in hopes of acquiring a job. However, he heard rumors and perceived that the VEC was not funding GEDs. Interviewee six searched for an alternative source of funding found at the MBL Foundation. After triangulating the interviewee's comments to the actual legislation, it was found that the GED was funded through the Trade Act. A major barrier for this dislocated worker was miscommunication of information about benefits. According to Cross (1986), the receipt of information is embedded in the chain of responses that lead to participation (p.151). The provider of retraining or reemployment services that presents clear and accurate information will promote positive influences along the chain of responses, resulting in the dislocated worker participating in their programs or services. If communication is false, misleading, or distorted by others, adults will be negatively influenced and decline participation.

*Virginia Employment Commission (VEC Group)*

The VEC Group did not participate in retraining programs, but participated in reemployment programs. Interviewees seven and eight's main goals were to help family and prepare for retirement. Hence, a major barrier to attending adult education was family responsibility. According to Cross (1986), providers of adult educational programs can enhance enrollment in retraining by providing alternatives for attending, such as online or satellite programs.

Another theme found was interviewees seven, eight, and ten perceived themselves as too old for retraining, and that experience should be held higher in regard to finding new employment. Cross (1986) found that family and friends influenced adults' perceptions of education; such was the case with interviewee ten. He stated that his father never finished high

school, but was still successful. Interviewee ten did not value education as a result of his childhood influence by his father. Researchers (e.g., Cross, 1986; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999) found that older adults rely on experiences that have worked for them in the past, and desired to accomplish tasks cautiously and accurately to prevent a blow to their self-esteem. If governmental agencies or nonprofit institutions desire to increase participation in retraining programs, the risk or threat of failure must be reduced. Cross (1986) recommends four interventions to increase participation:

1. Word of mouth: Individuals that are already participating could invite others as guests to a class.
2. Memberships or reference groups: Promote programs through community memberships such as veterans groups or lodges.
3. Build positive attitudes in labor unions: Many workers belong to unions, but do not participate in union educational activities. Leaders should promote and encourage enrollment. Union leaders have been found to have great influence over members and could promote a positive image of education.
4. Public relations programs: Clear and accurate information must be received by adults to promote a positive and worthwhile educational experience (p.140).

Realistically, some older adults will not be persuaded to attend retraining because of deep personal beliefs that they may have enough education or experience to find a job (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). Providers of reemployment services will profit to understand how older adults view themselves and the world around them. Brown (2003) found that many older adults need substantial assistance with the development of employable skills, because they may not have been involved in a job hunt for many years. In the current study, interviewee ten had worked for Lane Company for thirty years. Obviously, it had been many years since this individual had sought employment. He stated that he had experienced age discrimination when searching for a new job, and his negative attitude prevailed throughout the interview when discussing his job search. This emerging sentiment uncovered that the older dislocated workers of Lane Company may need more counseling or assistance in developing job search strategies. Stern (1993)

reported that the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has been very successful providing material and sponsorship for workshops that help older adults develop employable skills. This information implies that the VEC and MBL Foundation could profit by coordinating with AARP and creating a partnership to help older adults survive a layoff and, therefore, promote a positive attitude toward education and job-hunting.

*MBL Foundation and VEC (Both Group)*

Members of the Both Group admitted that the VEC could help a dislocated worker find retraining or new employment; however, the group felt that the VEC should have worked more closely with individuals. The group members also felt that the VEC may have been perceived by many dislocated workers as threatening and discourteous. This finding suggests that the VEC may need to reevaluate their customer service techniques. Cross (1986), and Merriam and Caffarella (1999) found that adult learners prefer non-threatening relationships that promote trust and mutual respect.

The Both Group praised the MBL Foundation, and believed they were helping people with uncomplicated procedures and sincerely cared for Lane Company's dislocated workforce. The MBL Foundation also allowed an individual to attend retraining programs of their preference. Interviewee twelve was motivated by the layoff to attend retraining to become a floral designer. Under the Trade Act, approved retraining programs are available to dislocated workers. Retraining programs are approved by an analysis of the local area to determine which careers are in demand. Interviewee twelve was devastated and lost her motivation to attend retraining after the VEC denied her request to attend a floral design program. However, after learning about the MBL Foundation, she regained her motivation and attended the floral design program via MBL Foundation funding. Interviewee twelve progressed through the retraining

program quickly and graduated with honors. As a result, her motivation for education increased, and she reapplied to one of the VEC's approved retraining programs. Researchers have shown (i.e., Brown, 2003; Cross, 1986; Merriam and Caffarella, 1999) that creating opportunities for adults in education will increase their motivation and facilitate lifelong learning.

The findings within the Both Group reinforce the need to reevaluate the policies of the VEC/Trade Act. By allowing a person to choose a program in which he/she feels successful or has more interest, participation in retraining will increase.

Another prevalent theme throughout the interviews was that Lane Company should be responsible for retraining its workforce. Interviewee eleven suggested a most profound statute that could possibly hold value in a congressional floor debate. The statute would encompass a two-year transition period for companies migrating overseas for cheaper labor. During the two-year period workers could attend retraining, and resume building and career development classes funded by the migrating company. The government could provide tax breaks for the company or match a percent of funds for dislocated workers. This initiative would be a win-win situation. Companies and the government would secure an ethical image, while workers receive retraining for reemployment, ultimately saving tax dollars in government funded retraining and reemployment programs.

#### *Conclusions: Research Question One*

Overall, each group participated in the organizations that met their retraining or reemployment goals most efficiently. The MBL Group's rationale for participating in the MBL Foundation and not the VEC was flexible policies that allowed for dislocated workers to choose the retraining they desired, and to maintain a new job after the layoff. The VEC/Trade Act does not allow for an individual to work and attend retraining simultaneously. This stipulation forces



dislocated workers that desire to work and attend retraining simultaneously to seek an alternative to state employment commissions or the Trade Act.

The underlying variable that persuaded the Both Group to participate in the MBL Foundation and VEC was the interviewees' need for an additional source to pay for their retraining. In many cases, the VEC/Trade Act was insufficient in providing funding for retraining expenses. Thus, dislocated workers that participate in retraining programs will often find that government funding is not sufficient in covering program expenses and will seek funding from additional sources.

The VEC Group participated solely in the VEC's reemployment programs because they did not prefer to attend retraining. However, each group member desired to draw unemployment to support their families, and to carry them over until retirement or a new job was found. Thus, dislocated workers who desire to obtain compensation and job placement will seek aid through state employment commissions. The VEC provides a provisional income for dislocated workers without requiring them to work. The interviewees perceived the MBL Foundation as not offering unemployment compensation, but funding for retraining.

*Research question two.* Why did Lane Company's dislocated workers choose not to participate in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and/or VEC? (Illustrated in Table 5.1, p.109)

*Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation)*

The group did not participate in the VEC, as the Trade Act does not allow dislocated workers to work and receive retraining benefits. However, the MBL Foundation was found to provide funding for retraining and allow the individual to work.

### *Virginia Employment Commission (VEC)*

This group did not participate in the MBL Foundation, because they perceived the organization as a provider of retraining benefits and not unemployment compensation or job seeker services. However, the group members did participate in reemployment programs funded through the VEC, because they desired to draw unemployment to support their families until they found a new job or could retire.

### *Neither the MBL Foundation nor VEC*

Members of the Neither Group did not participate in retraining or reemployment programs funded through the VEC or MBL Foundation. The underlying variable that prevented these dislocated workers from participating in the MBL Foundation or VEC was that they found employment independently prior to their last day of work at Lane. To understand their decision not to participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation retraining or reemployment programs, it is important to consider the interviewees' personal influences.

Interviewee one insisted that she had enough education and would not attend an educational program unless her employer insisted. She was also influenced by her husband to accept a job before her last day of work at Lane Company. Family influence or obligations are the most common barrier to education for women (Valentine, 1997). Interviewee one was also active in her church and placed her faith first in her life. Researchers (i.e., Benn, 1997; Courtney, 1992; Hall & Donaldson, 1997; Rubenson, 1998) found that community life or social participation can deter participation in education. Cross (1986) proposed that providers of adult education may increase participation by coordinating promotion activities through community organizations. One way in which organizations such as the MBL Foundation and the VEC can access the local community is by coordinating with Cooperative Extension. Cooperative

Extension explores the community to provide a description of what is really happening to families and communities (Debord, 1990). By partnering with Cooperative Extension, organizations that provide retraining and reemployment services can empathize with dislocated workers at a more personal level and promote a more caring image. Adults have been found to feel more comfortable and participate in educational programs when long-term and trusting relationships are formed (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Cooperative Extension works in communities by bringing citizens, local organizations, government, and memberships together to discuss current problems and the future of the community. Organizations such as the MBL Foundation and VEC can increase participation in their programs and services by attending such community meetings and providing information about their services, and by listening to the concerns of the people.

Interviewee two had positive influences from family and friends that persuaded her to attend college. However, her independence and refusal to accept handouts dissuaded her from participating in programs offered by the MBL Foundation or VEC. Personal beliefs and values have been found to be barriers that prevent an adult from participating in education (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). This interviewee attended college and firmly believed it was her responsibility to pay for attendance, because she was a hard worker and could provide for herself. Probing further into this interviewee's past revealed that her mother had a strong influence in her life, as she always pushed for this interviewee to provide for herself without reliance on charity.

The influence of family was prevalent in the lives of the Neither Group. Similarly, interviewee three was influenced by his father to believe education as unnecessary for locating employment. He also valued his occupational skills that enabled him to provide for his family.

By understanding the culture of the community, educational programming can be implemented and promoted (Bowling & Brahm, 2002). In this particular community, pride in providing for one's self and family is considered a quality. However, if the group members were not able to find reemployment, they may have been forced to seek assistance from the VEC or MBL Foundation. Understanding the characteristics of the community can help program providers relate to these types of individuals and promote a more positive experience for the dislocated workers.

*Conclusions: Research Question Two*

As found in research question two, the groups participated in the organization that met their needs. The MBL Group did not participate in the VEC because they desired to maintain a job while attending retraining. The VEC Group did not participate in the MBL Foundation, as they perceived them as providers of retraining benefits and not compensation or reemployment services. The Neither Group did not participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation's retraining or reemployment programs or services, because they located employment prior to their last day of work at Lane. This outcome may have been different if they had not found a job. Out of necessity, the group members may have been forced to approach the VEC or MBL Foundation for assistance. The group was also influenced by family to be independent, and providing for oneself was a quality. Thus, the theory that dislocated workers who have family influences persuading them to be independent will not seek retraining or reemployment services from government agencies or nonprofit organizations unless they are forced to, is reinforced.

*Research Question Three: What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the Virginia Employment Commission and the retraining and reemployment services it provides? (Illustrated by the groups' observations in Table 5.2)*

Table 5.2. Interview Groups' Positive and Negative Observations of the VEC

Organization: VEC	Groups			
	Neither Group	MBL Group	VEC Group	Both Group
Positive Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rapid response to the layoff</li> <li>- Visited Lane Company's facility and presented information about benefits</li> <li>- Pay for retraining</li> <li>- Help people find jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rapid response to the layoff</li> <li>- Visited Lane Company's facility and presented information about benefits</li> <li>- Pay for retraining</li> <li>- Help people find jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unemployment compensation</li> <li>- Easy to deal with</li> <li>- Enjoyed the seminars and social interaction</li> <li>- Help people find jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visited Lane Company's facility and presented information about benefits</li> <li>- Very helpful after dislocated worker established a relationship</li> <li>- Help people find jobs</li> </ul>
Negative Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Confusing benefits and presentations</li> <li>- Heard rumors of bad experiences from others</li> <li>- No retraining funds for college graduates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Did not care and heard rumors of bad experiences</li> <li>- Treated dislocated workers as if it were their fault</li> <li>- Lost paperwork</li> <li>- Turned down for benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Long lines and rude staff</li> <li>- Complicated procedures</li> <li>- Assume you know procedures</li> <li>- High cost of unemployment insurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rushed people through the system</li> <li>- Rude staff and confusing procedures</li> <li>- Compensation may run out before a person finishes retraining</li> </ul>
Suggested Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More encouraging, understanding, sincere, and less of a hassle</li> <li>- More individual counseling</li> <li>- Flexible retraining policies</li> <li>- Follow-up to ensure people are receiving benefits</li> <li>- Approve retraining for people with higher levels of education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better communication</li> <li>- More caring and flexible retraining policies</li> <li>- Allow people to work and attend retraining</li> <li>- More individual counseling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shorter lines</li> <li>- More friendly and understanding</li> <li>- Lower the cost of unemployment insurance</li> <li>- More individual counseling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear communication</li> <li>- Individual counseling</li> <li>- Flexible retraining policies</li> <li>- Allow people to work and attend retraining</li> <li>- Conduct a survey of community's needs</li> <li>- Hire Lane Company dislocated workers to help out at the VEC</li> </ul>

### *Neither Group*

Members of the Neither Group had similar views of the VEC. The members stated the VEC had presented information about their benefits when the layoff was announced on the Lane Company's premises. Each felt that the rapid response to the layoff by the VEC was admirable, and the group members understood they could receive retraining and reemployment benefits from the VEC. However, the interviewees expressed concern that the VEC seminar was confusing, and stated they had known of coworkers and friends who were also confused about their benefits and had similarly negative experiences with the VEC. Another concern revealed by this group was that there were no retraining funds for college graduates who were laid-off, per the Trade Act. As a result, the interviewees agreed that the VEC could improve their services by being more encouraging, understanding, sincere, less complicated, and accommodating. The group members also expressed a need for individual counseling, as they perceived the VEC's presentation about benefits as confusing. The group's recommendation was that the VEC may have cleared up confusion regarding benefits by instituting a follow-up to ensure that the displaced workers are receiving the necessary benefits.

### *MBL Group*

Members of the MBL Group had similar perceptions of the VEC as the Neither Group. The group members thought that the VEC's rapid response to the layoff was commendable, albeit confusing. Each member was aware that the VEC acted as an agency to aid in the job search and receive unemployment compensation. Interviewee four, for instance, attended a VEC seminar at Lane Company and attended another session at Altavista Armory. At the Armory, she signed up for unemployment compensation and retraining benefits provided by the Trade Act. Her experience with the VEC was negative, as she complained of VEC personnel seemingly

faulting her for having been laid-off. As a result of her experience, she did not participate through the VEC, but sought assistance from the MBL Foundation.

Interviewee five also had a negative perception of the VEC. She attended a VEC session at a Lane Company facility and found the information on available benefits confusing. She heard from friends who also had negative experiences, and found the VEC to be difficult when interacting with clients. Interviewee five desired to find a job prior to her last day at Lane, so she would not have to rely on the VEC. Likewise, interviewee six had a negative attitude toward the VEC. He had heard from friends that the VEC was very difficult to deal with, and he did not want to experience those difficulties.

The MBL Group felt that the VEC could be improved by being more caring and flexible in meeting the needs of displaced workers through clearer communication. Additionally, the group recommended an amendment to the Trade Act that allows a person to work and attend retraining simultaneously, and allocates more individualized counseling.

#### *VEC Group*

Members of the VEC Group agreed that the VEC was a resource for finding jobs and receiving unemployment compensation. Interviewee seven described her experience with the VEC as positive. She found them helpful and easy to deal with, but disliked the long lines. Interviewee eight also had a positive experience with the VEC. She stated that she expected to wait in line and that it was no problem, and she enjoyed the seminars and networking with other dislocated workers.

Interviewee nine had a negative attitude toward the VEC and felt their staff was discourteous. Interviewees seven, eight, and nine reported that the VEC procedures were not complicated in that they were accustomed to office-related employment. However, they believed

that some people would find the procedures complicated. Interviewee ten, for instance, stated that the procedures were complicated. He also had a negative view of the VEC, as he perceived the VEC to be unaccommodating to the people they serve.

The group members' consensus was that the VEC was a viable source for retraining and reemployment services. Some group members enjoyed networking and attending seminars presented by the VEC. However, members felt that the VEC may possibly improve their services through shorter lines, friendlier service, more understanding staff, individual counseling, and less complicated procedures.

#### *Both Group*

Members of the Both Group praised the VEC for visiting the Lane Company and presenting information about benefits offered to the dislocated workers. However, the group felt that the presentation may have been confusing to some. The group members asserted that the VEC was an outlet to find jobs and funding for retraining. Interviewee eleven, for instance, had a positive experience with the VEC, and claimed that he took the extra step to establish a relationship with one particular individual there. He believed the VEC meant well, but did not present the information clearly or sufficiently helped the Lane workers. Interviewee eleven also felt by taking the extra step to establish a relationship with a VEC representative was the reason for his positive experience, and that similar individual assistance would benefit other dislocated workers.

Interviewee twelve stated that she did not have any problems understanding the procedures and benefits of the VEC, based on her previous layoff experience from another manufacturing job. However, she perceived the VEC staff as unsympathetic and faulting her for having been laid off. Interviewee twelve stated that unemployment compensation may run out



prior to a person finishing retraining, and an amendment should be implemented to prevent such from happening.

Interviewee thirteen described her experience with the VEC as negative, as she perceived that they did not care about the workers of Lane. She suggested that the VEC may accommodate the needs of the people more efficiently through clearer communication and delivering their services in a more professional manner.

Overall, the Both Group felt that the VEC could be improved through clearer communication, individual counseling, and friendlier service. Additionally, the VEC may save tax dollars by offering flexible retraining policies that allow for people to work and attend retraining simultaneously. The interviewees also felt that the VEC needed to conduct a survey to address the needs of the community, and to determine their image status among community members. Group members recommended that the VEC may have benefited from hiring Lane Company dislocated workers on a temporary basis, as they could empathize with Lane's dislocated workforce and more effectively meet their needs.

#### *Conclusions: Perceptions of the VEC*

After analyzing the groups, a pattern emerged about the VEC. As evident in Table 5.2, most interviewees had negative perceptions of the VEC, whether they were influenced by others or had a negative personal experience. Some interviewees reported that their experience was positive, but complained of long lines and discourteous staff. Although it was accepted by all interviewees that the VEC does assist dislocated workers, their customer service needed improvement. Group members asserted that the VEC influenced them to feel as if it were their fault they had been laid off. This theme has been found in other studies. Lankford (2000) presented similar findings from a study of dislocated textile workers in Alabama to government

employment officials. These government officials were astonished, and learned that dislocated workers have very diverse needs and require more personalized attention. The current study paints a similar picture of the lack of understanding in regard to dislocated workers' emotions and needs by VEC personnel. The VEC may profit from a community survey to uncover their image status. Unfortunately, the VEC only evaluates the people that it serves and not the people it fails to attract. This situation can also distort unemployment rates and show that the majority of the population is employed (Lasely & Korshcing, 1984). Successful companies constantly analyze and study their target markets to increase awareness and sales. Providers of educational programs such as retraining should strive to do the same in order to attract new clientele (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). For example, Cooperative Extension has conducted needs assessments that address unemployment rates, federal assistance programs, and new employment opportunities (Lasely & Korshcing, 1984). By coordinating with Cooperative Extension, the VEC could identify the public's opinion and receive a more accurate account of unemployed workers.

A major concern of the groups was that the Trade Act did not allow for dislocated workers to attend retraining while they were employed. Members felt that unemployment compensation was not sufficient to support their families, nor would last the duration of their retraining. Allowing dislocated workers to be employed and attend retraining, the government could save tax dollars by reducing unemployment compensation dispersed to individuals. The study also demonstrates the need for individual counseling of dislocated workers. Many group members were concerned that the VEC's information sessions were confusing and some people may have required more personal attention. Older and less educated workers suffer from the effects of layoffs more so than younger and higher educated workers (Estes, Schweke, &

Lawrence, 2002). In most cases, these types of dislocated workers do not participate in education or other social events due to a fear of failure or low self-esteem (Cross, 1986; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Understanding the emotions of dislocated workers can help directors of retraining and reemployment programs relate to, and increase the participation of, dislocated workers in their programs.

Interviewee eleven, an older dislocated worker took an extra step to establish a personal relationship with an individual at the VEC. This relationship led him to have a positive view of, and experience with, the VEC. As stated previously, adults prefer to establish long-lasting and trustworthy relationships (Cross, 1986; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). However, interviewee eleven was college educated and held an executive position at Lane Company, where he was accustomed to establishing business relationships. It should be noted that not all Lane Company employees were found to be at his intellectual level. Nevertheless, his strategy is a model for future dislocated workers seeking retraining or reemployment services from the VEC.

*Research question four.* What are Lane Company's dislocated workers' perceptions of the MBL Foundation and the retraining and reemployment benefits it provides? (Illustrated by the groups' observations in Table 5.3)

Table 5.3. Interview Groups' Positive and Negative Observations of the MBL Foundation

Organization: MBL Foundation	Groups			
	Neither Group	MBL Group	VEC Group	Both Group
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caring Staff</li> <li>- Provided money for any type of retraining</li> <li>- Purchased computers for dislocated workers</li> <li>- No hassle / Flexible</li> <li>- Best alternative to the VEC</li> <li>- Trustworthy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caring Staff</li> <li>- Provided money for any type of retraining</li> <li>- Purchased computers for dislocated workers</li> <li>- No hassle / Flexible</li> <li>- Best alternative to the VEC</li> <li>- Trustworthy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caring Staff</li> <li>- Provided money for any type of retraining</li> <li>- Purchased computers for dislocated workers</li> <li>- No hassle / Flexible</li> <li>- Best alternative to the VEC</li> <li>- Trustworthy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caring Staff</li> <li>- Provided money for any type of retraining</li> <li>- Purchased computers for dislocated workers</li> <li>- No hassle / Flexible</li> <li>- Best alternative to the VEC</li> <li>- Trustworthy</li> </ul>
Negatives	N/A	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Susceptible to fraud</li> </ul>
Suggested Improvements	N/A	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More structured procedures to apply for benefits</li> </ul>

### *Neither Group*

Members of the Neither Group perceived the MBL Foundation as caring and a provider of funding for retraining and new computers. They felt that the MBL Foundation provided its services without complicated procedures, and a legitimate alternative provider of funding for retraining programs. Accordingly, the Neither Group had no suggestions for improving the services of the MBL Foundation, because they only heard positive comments.

### *MBL Group*

Members of the MBL Group also shared similar perceptions of the MBL Foundation. Interviewee four had a positive attitude toward the MBL Foundation. She explained how the MBL Foundation helped her without complications and sincerely cared about her situation. Interviewee five had a positive experience with the MBL Foundation. She could not apply to the VEC for retraining benefits, since she had found a job before her last day of work at Lane Company. However, she read in a letter from the MBL Foundation that retraining benefits were available to former workers of Lane Company. She investigated and received funding to attend retraining part-time. Interviewee six's perceptions of the MBL Foundation were also positive. Interviewee six attained funding through the MBL Foundation to receive his GED, as he was under the impression that the VEC would not pay for a GED. After hearing about the MBL Foundation from coworkers, and receiving a letter about retraining opportunities funded through the MBL Foundation, he approached their staff. He was pleased with the uncomplicated procedures and how sincerely the MBL Foundation responded to his well-being. The MBL Group felt that there was no need for improvement in the MBL Foundation's services.

### *VEC Group*

The VEC Group had positive perceptions of the MBL Foundation. Interviewee seven stated that the MBL Foundation was wonderful, and that she was certain funding was available for retraining. Interviewee eight also had a positive view of the MBL Foundation. She read about people who were going to school and thought retraining was beneficial. Interviewee nine's perceptions of the MBL Foundation were positive and reflected how the MBL Foundation was helping people and honestly cared about the Lane workers. Interviewee ten also had a positive perception of the MBL Foundation, and thought the provision of computers to Lane workers who sought retraining was admirable. Since this group did not participate in the MBL Foundation's services, the members felt they could not recommend any improvements for its services.

### *Both Group*

Members of the Both Group had positive perceptions of the MBL Foundation. Interviewee eleven also had a positive experience with the MBL Foundation. He stated the MBL Foundation was a "better deal" than the VEC, because there were no hassles or complicated procedures involved. Interviewee twelve praised the MBL Foundation and stated their procedures were uncomplicated. Interviewee thirteen had no complaints about the MBL Foundation and felt they cared about her. She also was concerned that the MBL Foundation may be susceptible to fraud by individuals not seeking retraining or not affiliated with Lane Company. However, she did feel since the MBL Foundation had a list of Lane workers, that fraud would be difficult. This group recommended the MBL Foundation implement more structured procedures to lessen the risk of fraud.

### *Conclusions: Perceptions of the MBL Foundation*

The emerging theme representing the perceptions regarding the MBL Foundation was positive, as presented in Table 5.3. However, some interviewees were concerned that the MBL Foundation's system was unstructured and it was susceptible to fraud. Still, this may be difficult as the MBL Foundation maintains a list of all former Lane Company workers, which verifies that the person requesting assistance was a Lane Company employee.

Another prevalent theme found was the lack of coordination between the VEC and MBL Foundation. However, the MBL Foundation strives to assist the dislocated workers, which in some cases, involves contacting the VEC and training providers for the dislocated worker. Although the MBL Foundation contacted the VEC, the two organizations did not share information pertaining to the concerns of the dislocated workers. Thus, a partnership may have benefited both organizations. In most cases, the MBL Foundation reimbursed expenses that the VEC did not cover for retraining. By partnering and sharing information, each could analyze their policies and make appropriate adjustments. For example, one interviewee was enrolled in a medical program that required uniforms and other medical equipment. The VEC/Trade Act did not provide enough funds to pay for the uniforms or equipment. This miscalculation may have been due to inaccurate estimates of funds needed to attend the program. Sharing information about additional funding needed by the dislocated worker from the MBL Foundation could help legislators in advocating to increase funding for government-sponsored retraining programs. Additionally, the MBL Foundation, located in Altavista, was found to have more insight to the daily lives and concerns of Lane Company's dislocated workers. Consequently, this information could help VEC personnel better understand and relate to the concerns of Lane Company's dislocated workers, despite its location twenty-five miles north of Altavista.

Cooperative Extension may also play a role in coordinating information between the MBL Foundation and VEC. Cooperative Extension conducts community needs assessments addressing the accuracy of current labor statistics in some states (Lasely & Korshcing, 1984). Cooperative Extension's Family and Consumer Sciences and Community Initiative (FCS & CI) Agents play a valuable role in conducting educational programs that enhance family and community stability.

1. To provide education from numerous disciplines addressing societal issues of concern to individuals and families.
2. To assist communities in analyzing the status of families and identifying appropriate community action to meet the needs of families.
3. To train volunteers and program assistants to assist the Family and Consumer Sciences & Community Initiatives program.
4. To motivate people to become involved in community issues and to develop leadership potential in those people.
5. To collaborate with other Extension program areas, and form partnerships with other agencies, community organizations, and educational groups (Cooperative Extension, 2003).

However, the former Virginia State Extension Director stated that due to the limited number of FCS & CI Agents and lack of funding, it would be very difficult to maintain a presence in every community across the state. A recent report proposed that losses of funding for Virginia Cooperative Extension/Agricultural Experiment Station are projected to be \$4.3 million in 2003 (7 percent of current level) and \$4.9 million in fiscal year 2004 (8 percent of current level) (Richard-Thomas, 2002). This finding is unfortunate, and the need for Cooperative Extension within the Altavista area is warranted.

Part of the qualitative research methodology is to triangulate findings constantly during the data analysis (Merriam, 1998). Accordingly, the researcher investigated the Altavista area thoroughly to locate retraining and reemployment services for individuals and families that had experienced financial devastation, such as a job loss. The major providers were determined to be



the VEC and MBL Foundation. The researcher also found a nonprofit organization, Donation-A-Week-Neighbors (DAWN), which provided needy families with food, clothing, funding for utilities and rent, and financial and consumer instruction. However, this non-profit organization lacked the funds to provide substantial retraining or reemployment programs. The DAWN organization had coordinated with the MBL Foundation to help some devastated families of Lane Company receive food and money for utilities. The Director of the DAWN organization stated that many of the people they served needed instruction in budgeting their family income. The major concern was that many household consumers made poor choices when grocery shopping that resulted in not having enough food for their families. The DAWN organization struggled in locating qualified instructors and lacked the funding to hire a fulltime staff. This type of instruction is specifically what the Family and Consumer Sciences and Community Initiative specializes in.

For a partnership to work with Cooperative Extension, funding must be restored. Cooperative Extension has the expertise, experience, and facilities to conduct community development research and outreach. Its rich history of community development programs has served citizens and helped build strong communities that make our country the most prosperous and productive in the world.

#### *Recommendations for Future Research*

- 1) Conduct an evaluation of the VEC, which includes such elements as customer service, individual assistance, needs of older adults, compliance with laws, and accuracy of disseminated information.
- 2) Conduct an evaluation of the MBL Foundation, which involves a plan to coordinate the sharing of information between the VEC and Cooperative Extension.

- 3) Study the entire population of the Lane Company's dislocated workforce and compare the findings to those of the present study.
- 4) Conduct a follow-up study of those individuals participating in the present study in order to assess their level of success/failure in retraining programs.
- 5) Study the economic effects on the community through an analysis of new industry/jobs, tax revenue, and population growth.
- 6) Determine the factors that enhance collaboration between industry and governing agencies in assisting dislocated workers.
- 7) Determine the factors that enhance collaboration between nonprofit organizations and industry in assisting dislocated workers.

#### *Recommendations for Practice*

The most profound finding of the study is that the retraining and reemployment needs of Lane Company's dislocated workers were accommodated. However, to accommodate those needs, two organizations were required, the VEC and the MBL Foundation. Many dislocated workers approached the VEC to apply for retraining, but found that the funding was insufficient or the retraining program they desired was not approved under the Trade Act. A strategy to improve the issue for future dislocated workers may require the federal government to appropriate more funds to the Trade Act. Additionally, organizations could initiate a fund or foundation, similar to the MBL Foundation, to ensure their workers have the opportunity to attend retraining in case of a company shutdown or migration overseas. Company profits or a payroll deduction system may possibly provide the required financial support to establish the fund or foundation. Money invested by employees could also be collected if the company shuts down, migrates overseas, or when the employee retires or resigns.

## *Conclusion*

This study provides insight to why the dislocated workers of Lane Company participated in retraining and reemployment programs funded by the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation), Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), both organizations, or neither organization. Dislocated workers' motives for participating in the VEC and MBL Foundation programs were brought to life through a qualitative analysis of thirteen interviews.

The findings suggest that the dislocated workers of Lane Company perceive the VEC as a viable source for retraining and reemployment benefits; however, they are concerned that current legislation and VEC services are not meeting their retraining needs. Although the displaced workers feel that the Trade Act is beneficial, they also believe that it should be modified so individuals can work and attend retraining simultaneously. Additionally, the interviewees felt that the VEC may secure a more positive image by relating to the dislocated workers' concerns and experiences of being laid off.

Dislocated workers perceive the MBL Foundation as a viable alternative for additional retraining funding and programs they prefer. However, the dislocated workers are concerned that the MBL Foundation may be susceptible to fraud. Additionally, the findings suggest that the sharing of information between the MBL Foundation and the VEC may provide a comprehensive analysis of the needs of dislocated workers. Coordination between these two organizations may improve legislation by accurately projecting the costs of attending retraining, and the outcomes of dislocated workers who work and attend retraining simultaneously.

The ongoing search for reducing labor costs by America's manufacturers will continue to lead to a displacement of workers. Though future research is needed, this study provides the workforce development professional with the perceptions and decisions of four groups of

dislocated workers regarding retraining and reemployment programs and services. The value of these observations provides insight to future research variables, such as the need for organizational evaluations, legislation revisions, and coordination between industry, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies.

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Appendix A  
Interview Questions

## Interview Guide Based on Cross' Chain of Response Model

(Presented in the order in which the questions were posed.)

### *I. Preliminary Questions:*

- Please elaborate on your work history in regards to position, promotions, and experiences at Lane Company.
- Has anyone in your family ever worked for Lane Company? Who?
- Are you married? Tell me about your spouse and children.
- What is your educational background?

### *II. Cross' Model:*

#### Life Transitions (D)

- Take me through a typical workday at Lane Company before the announcement of the layoff.
- Explain what your emotions and your future expectations were when you received the news about the layoff.
- Describe how your family and friends reacted.
- Explain how your life has changed since the layoff (e.g., new job, education, retirement, etc.)
- Describe how you are coping with the layoff situation.

#### Importance of Goals (C)

- Describe your most important goal after being laid-off.
- How have you accomplished or plan to accomplish that goal?
- [Only ask if their goal was retraining] If you participated or plan to participate in retraining to accomplish a goal, describe what you are expecting to gain from retraining. Also, explain why you believe retraining will accomplish that goal.



#### Attitudes about education (B)

- Explain any educational programs in which you participated for your job at Lane Company.
- Describe your educational experiences in school from youth to adulthood.
- How do you feel about retraining as a solution to finding new employment?
- Have you participated or plan to participate in a retraining program to find or qualify for a new occupation? If so, explain why you are participating, and what or who influenced you to participate. If not, explain why not, and what or who influenced you not to participate.

#### Self-evaluation (A)

- Explain how you perceived your self-confidence in your former job or skills used at Lane Company.
- Explain how you perceive your self-confidence in education.

#### Opportunities and Barriers (E)

- Explain any retraining or reemployment opportunities that have been presented to you since the announcement of the layoff.
- Explain any barriers that could have or did prevent you from participating in retraining. How did you overcome those barriers?

#### Information (F)

- Describe what you know about the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation). How did you find out about the VEC and/or the MBL Foundation?
- Explain any information presented to you about retraining or reemployment services by the VEC, MBL Foundation, or other organizations.

[The next two questions only apply to those who participated in the VEC or know about the VEC]

- Are you accepting or have you accepted any benefits from the VEC? If so, describe those benefits and explain your experience with the VEC.
- Explain why you would or would not recommend the VEC to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve their services?
- Explain why you chose the VEC and not the MBL Foundation to provide retraining or reemployment benefits.

[The next two questions only apply to those who participated in the MBL Foundation or know about the MBL Foundation]

- Are you accepting or have you accepted any benefits from the MBL Foundation? If so, describe those benefits and explain your experience with the MBL Foundation.
- Explain why you would or would not recommend the MBL Foundation to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve their services?
- Explain why you chose the MBL Foundation and not the VEC to provide retraining or reemployment benefits.

[The next three questions only apply to those who did not participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation]

- Explain why you did not attempt to seek retraining or reemployment benefits from either the VEC or MBL Foundation.
- What types of services or benefits would you recommend to be offered to dislocated workers?

- Would those services or benefits persuade you to participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation? Why?

Participation (G)

No data is collected for this category. Only the hypothesis is stated for why the dislocated workers of Lane Company chose retraining and reemployment benefits from the MBL Foundation, VEC, both, or chose not to accept benefits from either organization.

## Appendix B

### Expert Panel of Workforce Professionals

## Panel of Experts

The panel of experts represented professionals in the area of workforce development.

These professionals have extensive experience in interviewing dislocated workers, and have coordinated retraining and reemployment benefits and services for the dislocated workforce.

The following are members of the panel of experts:

- 1) Linda Rodriguez  
Administrator  
Central Virginia Community College
  
- 2) Michael Irby  
Administrator  
Central Virginia Community College
  
- 3) Edith Beck  
Workforce Development Specialist  
Virginia Employment Commission
  
- 4) Steve Jester  
Administrator/YMCA Director  
Lane Education Trust Fund  
Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation
  
- 5) Deborah G. Alfors  
Program Coordinator  
Region 2000 Career Center
  
- 6) Tennille A. Berry  
Career Information Specialist  
Region 2000 Career Center

## Appendix C

### Ethics Protocol/Consent Form

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Participants

In Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

A Study of Retraining and Reemployment Services for Dislocated Workers

Investigator: Richard G. Burnett

I. PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH/PROJECT

The purpose of this research is to identify the perceptions of Lane Company's dislocated workers about retraining and reemployment services of the Lane Foundation and Virginia Employment Commission.

II. PROCEDURES

After signing this consent form, you will be asked to answer questions about your work experience at Lane Company, and your perceptions of the Lane Foundation and Virginia Employment Commission.

III. RISKS

There is minimal risk involved in participating in this study. The possible discomfort that you may experience is similar to feelings one is subjected to when completing other questionnaires or interviews. Safeguards to minimizing your discomfort will be that you are free to withdraw your participation at anytime without any negative consequence.

IV. BENEFITS

Your participation in the study will provide valuable information to help the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation and the Virginia Employment Commission improve their services for dislocated workers.

V. EXTENT OF ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The results of this study will be kept strictly confidential. At no time will the researcher release the results of the study to anyone, other than the individuals working on the project, without your written consent. The information you provide will have your name removed and only a subject number will identify you during analyses. Your name will never be associated with this data. Furthermore, the interview will be taped with a recorder, and the tapes will be reviewed by Greg Burnett and destroyed after complete analysis has been conducted.

## VI. COMPENSATION

No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage your participation.

## VII. FREEDOM TO WITHDRAW

You can refuse to answer any question, and you may withdraw from this research at anytime.

## VIII. APPROVAL OF RESEARCH

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and by the Department of Career and Technical Education.

## IX. SUBJECT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have the following responsibilities: Sit for approximately 45 minutes and answer questions about my work experience at Lane Company and my perceptions of the Lane Foundation and Virginia Employment Commission.

## X. SUBJECT'S PERMISSION

I have read and understand the Informed Consent and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

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SUBJECT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I may contact:

Primary Investigator:

Richard G. Burnett, 540-818-3610 / [riburnet@vt.edu](mailto:riburnet@vt.edu)

Faculty Adviser:

Dr. K. Kurt Eschenmann, 540-231-8345 / [eschmann@vt.edu](mailto:eschmann@vt.edu)

Human Subject Committee Chair:

Dr. Jan Nesor, 540-231-8327 / [nespor@vt.edu](mailto:nespor@vt.edu)

Chair of Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board:

David M. Moore, 540-231-4991 / [moored@vt.edu](mailto:moored@vt.edu)



## Appendix D

### Groups' Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross's Chain of Response Model

#### *Neither Group*

- Interviewee 1 (p. 153)
- Interviewee 2 (p. 154)
- Interviewee 3 (p. 155)

#### *MBL Group*

- Interviewee 4 (p. 156)
- Interviewee 5 (p. 157)
- Interviewee 6 (p. 158)

#### *VEC Group*

- Interviewee 7 (p. 159)
- Interviewee 8 (p. 160)
- Interviewee 9 (p. 161)
- Interviewee 10 (p. 162)

#### *Both Group*

- Interviewee 11 (p. 163)
- Interviewee 12 (p. 164)
- Interviewee 13 (p. 165)

Table D1. Neither Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

Neither Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trusting</li> <li>• Experienced</li> <li>• Educated</li> <li>• Happy</li> <li>• Sad</li> <li>• Hard Worker</li> <li>• Family-Oriented</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Busy</li> <li>• Loyal</li> <li>• Christian</li> <li>• Supportive</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hated it</li> <li>• Did not like it</li> <li>• Made good grades</li> <li>• Good for some</li> <li>• Classes help</li> <li>• I did not participate</li> <li>• Complicated</li> <li>• My training at Lane was good</li> <li>• Skills transferred</li> <li>• Learning helped me</li> <li>• Cannot make it without it</li> <li>• Employers are looking for it</li> <li>• Hoped for good grades</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dad said, find a new job</li> <li>• Husband wanted me to take a new job.</li> <li>• Coworkers had bad experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Called my pastor</li> <li>• Pray for the people</li> <li>• Made a list</li> <li>• Focus on things we could control</li> <li>• Find out needs and wants</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Budgeting</li> <li>• Find new job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heard rumors of layoff</li> <li>• Ignored rumors</li> <li>• Shocked</li> <li>• Disbelief</li> <li>• I will never forget</li> <li>• Bad and a good thing</li> <li>• I would of just stayed there.... not a bad thing</li> <li>• Sad when I left</li> <li>• Broaden-Horizons</li> <li>• Strengthen my faith in God</li> <li>• Explore new careers</li> <li>• Offered a job</li> <li>• Talked to my husband</li> <li>• Got a job at a Bank</li> <li>• Quit and got a better job...better money and benefits</li> <li>• Sermon on change</li> <li>• Sang a song of hope</li> <li>• Nothing is permanent</li> <li>• Cannot depend on things of this world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No money</li> <li>• Goal was for a new job</li> <li>• Dad told to find another job</li> <li>• Husband wanted me to take a new job.</li> <li>• Husband said, I would only get unemployment for so long...then what?</li> <li>• Friend told me about a job.</li> <li>• Mom told me about a job.</li> <li>• Hated school</li> <li>• Did not like to study</li> <li>• Confusing</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw no money first week of unemployment</li> <li>• I don't know much about the VEC.</li> <li>• I think you get money for school, travel, and supplies.</li> <li>• VEC talked at Lane in 15-minute segments.</li> <li>• Confusing at the time</li> <li>• Coworkers had bad experience</li> <li>• I did feel you could call them</li> <li>• They were helpful</li> <li>• VEC needs to understand and encourage...less red tape</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heard good things...money for retraining and computers</li> <li>• Received a letter</li> <li>• Minnie is wonderful</li> <li>• Nothing negative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did not participate in VEC or Lane Foundation programs</li> </ul>

Table D2. Occurrences Found Related to the Seven Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

Neither Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I wanted to move up</li> <li>I belonged at Lane</li> <li>Proud</li> <li>Very Confident</li> <li>Empowered</li> <li>Organized</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good experience</li> <li>It's great for anybody</li> <li>Encourage anyone</li> <li>You need it</li> <li>Enjoyed College</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executives influenced me</li> <li>My supervisor influenced me</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finish Bachelor's</li> <li>Get a job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduated high school</li> <li>Community College-worked at the same time</li> <li>Got a job at Lane, loved it,</li> <li>Graduated from CVCC after 8 years</li> <li>New job/promotion at Lane in credit dept. hated it</li> <li>Quit Lane</li> <li>I belonged to Lane</li> <li>Came back to Lane new job in benefits...loved it.</li> <li>Started Bachelors</li> <li>Laid off- but was offered to stay until the end</li> <li>Shocked, sad, cried</li> <li>Found another job and left Lane</li> <li>Graduated with Bachelors</li> <li>Hated new job</li> <li>Quit job</li> <li>Found new job</li> <li>Like my new job...need more money</li> <li>Hope to find another Lane</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No opportunities after layoff</li> <li>Money – student loans</li> <li>Childcare - babysitters/ family</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Big meeting at Lane</li> <li>Helpful to some, but not me</li> <li>Lady was encouraging</li> <li>Needs to go further</li> <li>Follow up</li> <li>More help for educated people</li> <li>I did not get very far with them</li> <li>Too much red tape...</li> <li>Requirements are hard</li> <li>Made me feel like I should not use their services because I had education and experience</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wonderful</li> <li>I helped send out letters to inform employees</li> <li>Minnie is super and magnificent</li> <li>She is doing things she does not have to</li> <li>Did not receive any help from them</li> <li>I did not want to take money from people that needed it more than I did, but it was there</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not participate in VEC or Lane Foundation programs</li> </ul>

Table D3. Neither Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

Neither Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experienced</li> <li>Straight forward</li> <li>Hard worker</li> <li>Loyal</li> <li>Supportive</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I went because I had to</li> <li>I didn't like it</li> <li>I don't consider myself a genius, but I did ok</li> <li>You need it today</li> <li>I am taking classes for work</li> <li>Not hard...just I have other things to do</li> <li>Retraining is good if you need it</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My father and mother only went to high school</li> <li>Father had a good job with out college</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take care of my family</li> <li>Find another job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High School</li> <li>Work</li> <li>Lane</li> <li>Certificate from CVCC</li> <li>Laid off</li> <li>New job as a construction supervisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No money</li> <li>Goal was for a new job.</li> <li>Did not like school</li> <li>Benefits were Confusing</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I don't know much about the VEC.</li> <li>I think you get money for retraining if you qualify</li> <li>VEC talked at Lane</li> <li>Confusing at the time</li> <li>Coworkers had bad experience</li> <li>I did not want to go through the unemployment process</li> <li>VEC needs to be less of a hassle</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heard good things...money for retraining and computers</li> <li>Received a letter</li> <li>Minnie is a good person</li> <li>Nothing negative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not participate in VEC or Lane Foundation programs</li> </ul>

Table D4. MBL Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

MBL Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	6. Information Cont.
Interview 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyed Lane</li> <li>• Experienced</li> <li>• Excited about the layoff</li> <li>• I respect my job at Lane</li> <li>• I was confident in my job</li> <li>• Patient</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goofed off in high school</li> <li>• Did like college after high school</li> <li>• Went to college when I felt like it</li> <li>• Not ready for it</li> <li>• Learned how important it is when I started work</li> <li>• Retraining is great for anybody</li> <li>• Now that I know what I want I am confident in school</li> <li>• Hard to juggle school and work</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family was supportive and excited</li> <li>• Granny was very happy and helped me with books</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School</li> <li>• Possible by flexible job ad Lane Foundation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school</li> <li>• CVCC</li> <li>• Dropped out</li> <li>• YMCA</li> <li>• Ericsson</li> <li>• Applied to Lane</li> <li>• Turned down</li> <li>• Then called back and hired at Lane</li> <li>• Laid off</li> <li>• CVCC</li> <li>• Altavista Shoes shop - quit, needed insurance</li> <li>• YMCA</li> <li>• Learned to respect my job at Lane</li> <li>• Had a steady income, regular hours, and insurance</li> <li>• Desire that for my future</li> <li>• Graduate in May</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The layoff was an opportunity to go back to school</li> <li>• Possible by Lane Foundation</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting at Armory</li> <li>• I registered there</li> <li>• Did not get a check in four weeks</li> <li>• Bad experience</li> <li>• Turned down for benefits</li> <li>• Wrong program they said...it was a two-year program!</li> <li>• They were hateful</li> <li>• They don't care</li> <li>• My sister is going through the same thing</li> <li>• They really did me over</li> <li>• I feel for anybody that has to go through the VEC</li> <li>• Would not recommend to anybody</li> <li>• Find another source if possible</li> <li>• Need more days to process paperwork</li> <li>• They told me 2 days per week</li> <li>• No time for me</li> <li>• Something did not work for me</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC cont.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explained it better</li> <li>• Don't assume we know everything</li> <li>• Better communication</li> <li>• Nicer people</li> <li>• It was not our fault</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great program</li> <li>• Paid for all my education</li> <li>• I just give them my receipts and they give me a check</li> <li>• Give people computers</li> <li>• Dinner with Minnie</li> <li>• Recommend to anybody</li> <li>• Minnie is a great lady</li> <li>• She is doing things she does not have to do</li> </ul> <p><u>7. Participation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in the Lane Foundation, but not the VEC.</li> </ul>

Table D5. MBL Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

MBL Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Experienced</li> <li>• Straight forward</li> <li>• Hard worker</li> <li>• Loyal</li> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Smart, new my job well</li> <li>• Confident</li> <li>• Happy</li> <li>• People person</li> <li>• Organized</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I liked high school</li> <li>• Could not afford college</li> <li>• You need it today</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family supportive of school</li> <li>• Husband says get all you can get, but we need an income coming in</li> <li>• My father and mother only went to high school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find another job</li> <li>• Could not chance waiting and missing out on a good job</li> <li>• Go to school to ensure stable employment, but work at the same time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• Lane 15 years</li> <li>• New job in medical field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No money</li> <li>• Goal was for a new job</li> <li>• Husband was not working</li> <li>• VEC was Confusing</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They came to Lane and Armory</li> <li>• You can get money for retraining if you qualify.</li> <li>• Confusing</li> <li>• Coworkers had bad experience</li> <li>• Hard to find 2 jobs every week</li> <li>• Rude people</li> <li>• I did not want to go through the unemployment process, needed a job.</li> <li>• Could not chance waiting and missing out on a good job</li> <li>• VEC needs to be less of a hassle</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good</li> <li>• Provide money for school</li> <li>• Heard about it through friends</li> <li>• Minnie is a wonderful lady</li> <li>• Nothing negative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated through Lane Foundation</li> </ul>

Table D6. MBL Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

MBL Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• I was confident in my job</li> <li>• Not confident in school</li> <li>• Lots of common sense</li> <li>• Was a productive worker</li> <li>• Jolly</li> <li>• Encourager</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disliked school</li> <li>• Used to believe I didn't need it</li> <li>• People need more skills/education today</li> <li>• Enjoy school today</li> <li>• Something I should of did years ago</li> <li>• Want it for my children</li> <li>• I like the social part</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family supportive of school</li> <li>• Wife pushed me to get my GED</li> <li>• My father and mother did not finish school</li> <li>• Had friends drop out of school and do fine</li> <li>• Coworkers thought they were too old</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find another job</li> <li>• Go to school to qualify for job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quit high school</li> <li>• Lane 16 years</li> <li>• Laid off</li> <li>• GED through Lane Foundation</li> <li>• Correctional Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correctional officer job</li> <li>• Needed GED to get job</li> <li>• No money</li> <li>• Needed benefits</li> <li>• Goal was for a new job</li> <li>• VEC was confusing</li> <li>• Lane Foundation was easy</li> <li>• They took care of everything</li> <li>• All I did is show up for class</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VEC talked at Lane</li> <li>• Very confusing</li> <li>• People were nice</li> <li>• However, coworkers had bad experience</li> <li>• Rude</li> <li>• Treat you like it was our fault</li> <li>• They had better things to do</li> <li>• I did not want to go through the VEC</li> <li>• VEC needs to be less of a hassle</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very kind people</li> <li>• Friend told me</li> <li>• You can get money for school and a computer</li> <li>• Minnie is a very nice woman</li> <li>• Nothing negative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in Lane Foundation, but not the VEC</li> </ul>

Table D7. VEC Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

VEC Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian</li> <li>• Family oriented</li> <li>• Community oriented</li> <li>• Ready to go to work</li> <li>• Confident in my job skills</li> <li>• Layoff made me want to work harder</li> <li>• God led me to Lane</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not interested in going back to school</li> <li>• I may take a class in computers</li> <li>• I liked school</li> <li>• I took it too serious</li> <li>• Never satisfied unless I got an A</li> <li>• I did good in school</li> <li>• I did not go to college</li> <li>• Not competent in computer class</li> <li>• I learned a lot by myself and from coworkers about computers</li> <li>• If I were younger I may would pursue school</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My parents were not as involved in my life</li> <li>• Did not pressure college...just get a job and start a family</li> <li>• Friends think they are too old</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out God's will</li> <li>• Help my family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• Klopman</li> <li>• Married</li> <li>• Stay at home mom</li> <li>• Substitute teaching</li> <li>• Klopman</li> <li>• Laid off</li> <li>• Lane 18 years</li> <li>• We were family at Lane</li> <li>• Laid off</li> <li>• I was sad</li> <li>• Unemployment</li> <li>• Helping family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family obligations in NOVA</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• If I were younger I may would pursue school</li> <li>• Male friends feel they were too old to get a job or go to school</li> <li>• Not heard that from women</li> <li>• I have had no job opportunities</li> <li>• Nobody is hiring</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talked to us at Lane</li> <li>• Very informative</li> <li>• Very good</li> <li>• Very helpful</li> <li>• Not bad or hard</li> <li>• No bad experiences</li> <li>• However, I did have to wait a long time</li> <li>• Recommend having two lines...one for new people and one for resign-ups</li> <li>• Also, VEC needs internet and more phone services</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't know a lot about it</li> <li>• I just read about it in the paper</li> <li>• I know its money there and it helps</li> <li>• Some people got computers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did not participate in VEC or Lane Foundation programs</li> </ul>



Table D8. VEC Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

VEC Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very confident in my job</li> <li>• I knew it up one side and down the other</li> <li>• I could key stroke 220 strokes per minute</li> <li>• I was confident enough to make it through school</li> <li>• I could learn the PC, but never would have been as fast as I was on the terminal.</li> <li>• Only person in my department that did not switch over</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I never used anything thing I learned from high school</li> <li>• The only thing that helped was typing, bookkeeping, etc</li> <li>• Retraining is good for some people</li> <li>• It depends on what you want to do</li> <li>• Did not want to learn how to use a PC</li> <li>• I only used a terminal</li> <li>• I have key punched 41 years...that's enough</li> <li>• If you are young its good</li> <li>• In today's times you need it</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family did not promote college, just a job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help my family</li> <li>• Help my friends</li> <li>• Make out until I could draw Social Security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• Lane 2 years</li> <li>• Stanley Town 4 years</li> <li>• Lane 36 years in data entry</li> <li>• We were a family at Lane</li> <li>• Laid off</li> <li>• Unemployment</li> <li>• Unemployment ran out in November 2002</li> <li>• Retiring in July</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could not go to school and help my family</li> <li>• Mother was sick</li> <li>• I have an eye disease that prevents me from reading for long periods</li> <li>• Grandchildren</li> <li>• Friend has cancer</li> <li>• I am too old for school</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Came to Lane</li> <li>• I went to session at the VEC</li> <li>• I enjoyed that</li> <li>• Lots of people their that had been laid off from other companies</li> <li>• They gave us information</li> <li>• But I knew what my benefits were</li> <li>• Had to wait, but expected to</li> <li>• Improve insurance programs (to high)</li> <li>• Insurance is rip off</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I do not know a lot about it</li> <li>• I know they have helped with computers and school</li> <li>• Ms. Lane is very sweet</li> <li>• The Lane Family are just a nice group of people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in VEC, but not the Lane Foundation.</li> </ul>

Table D9. VEC Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

VEC Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loyal</li> <li>• Hard worker</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Concerned for other people</li> <li>• Christian</li> <li>• Have faith</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I loved school</li> <li>• I was a honor student</li> <li>• I took classes at Lane about computers...enjoyed them</li> <li>• I trained people at Lane</li> <li>• I was going back to school, but found a job first</li> <li>• I did not know what I wanted to study</li> <li>• My age</li> <li>• School does not work for people older than 55...very difficult</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family wanted me to find another job years ago</li> <li>• Husband said, no big deal</li> <li>• My daughter thought it was hilarious she said, mom and me will be in school together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a new job</li> <li>• If I could not find a job I was going back to school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated High School</li> <li>• Job at Lane 18 years</li> <li>• Laid off</li> <li>• Cried until I was sick</li> <li>• Baby-sit grandchildren to deal with stress</li> <li>• Talk with friends to cope</li> <li>• Could not drive by Lane without getting mad or emotional</li> <li>• Part of me died</li> <li>• Unemployment 6 months</li> <li>• Nationwide</li> <li>• Quit Nationwide</li> <li>• New job in Lawyer's office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Money, however, I could get funding from the Trade Act and Lane foundation</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Came to Lane</li> <li>• Informed us that we could get retraining</li> <li>• Coworkers told me what to expect</li> <li>• No problems signing up</li> <li>• Worked smoothly</li> <li>• No complaints</li> <li>• However, they assume you already know what to do</li> <li>• Not enough people helping</li> <li>• Rude</li> <li>• Made us feel like it was our fault</li> <li>• A little slow</li> <li>• Not concerned about us</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not know a lot about it</li> <li>• Heard that they paid for school and computers</li> <li>• Minnie is a good lady. She has genuine concern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in VEC, but not the Lane Foundation.</li> </ul>

Table D10. VEC Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

VEC Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	7. Participation
Interview 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After 30 years at Lane you get pretty good at it</li> <li>• I loved my job</li> <li>• I was a good supervisor</li> <li>• My confidence in school would be low</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hated it</li> <li>• I liked sports</li> <li>• Did not concentrate on it</li> <li>• I worked</li> <li>• Education is overrated</li> <li>• It's a shame people need it today</li> <li>• I don't need school I know my job</li> <li>• I was a supervisor for 30 years</li> <li>• I have experience</li> <li>• I am too old</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My father never finished school</li> <li>• Work was more important as a boy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help my wife</li> <li>• Find work</li> <li>• Make out until I can draw Social Security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked 30 years at Lane</li> <li>• I was mad</li> <li>• I am not old enough to retire</li> <li>• We were depressed</li> <li>• Talked with friends</li> <li>• Drink a couple cold beers</li> <li>• Looked for work</li> <li>• Wife died</li> <li>• Neighbors brought us food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am too old for school</li> <li>• Nobody wants to hire a old man in his fifties</li> <li>• Age discrimination</li> <li>• I need to work</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real pain</li> <li>• I did not like them</li> <li>• They were confusing</li> <li>• Not understanding</li> <li>• Compensation was fair</li> <li>• They need to help more</li> <li>• Need to treat people like it was not our fault</li> </ul> <p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good people</li> <li>• They care</li> <li>• The way to go if you want school</li> <li>• They pay for what the VEC does not</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in VEC, but not the Lane Foundation.</li> </ul>

Table D11. Both Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

Both Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	6. Information Cont.
Interview 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressed in Lane</li> <li>Skilled</li> <li>Favor change</li> <li>I was ready to change</li> <li>Responsible Manager</li> <li>Leader</li> <li>Competitive</li> <li>Hard worker</li> <li>Attention to detail</li> <li>People person</li> <li>We complained a lot at Lane</li> <li>But we did not know how good we had it</li> <li>Stood up for what I thought was right</li> <li>Motivator</li> <li>Lived through a layoff before</li> <li>Encouraged my workers</li> <li>Christian</li> <li>Tremendous Faith</li> <li>Want to be challenged</li> <li>Free spender</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.0 GPA</li> <li>Experience is more important than education</li> <li>You need it today</li> <li>Computer skills I learned in school gave me confidence to find a job</li> <li>I would not have a job if I had not gone back to school</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family was supportive for school</li> <li>Daughter thought it was hilarious</li> <li>We competed against each other in school...I beat her</li> <li>Family was not supportive of moving</li> <li>Daughter complained we are so poor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Going back to school</li> <li>Excel in school</li> <li>Learn all I could</li> <li>Find a job</li> <li>I knew I was going to find a job comparable to Lane</li> <li>Still, waiting to make flower arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High School</li> <li>Burlington 15 years</li> <li>Laid off</li> <li>Lane 13 years</li> <li>Laid off</li> <li>First year of college at 46 years old</li> <li>School Georgia Floral Design</li> <li>School CVCC</li> <li>Finance job</li> <li>911 Dispatcher</li> <li>Moore's Electric account manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job offers in Mississippi and N.C.</li> <li>Family was not supportive of moving</li> <li>Daughter complained we are so poor</li> <li>Georgia had only program in floral design</li> <li>Attended by correspondence</li> <li>Money</li> <li>Used Lane Foundation and VEC</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Came to Lane and Armory</li> <li>Last laid off, so we had to go to the VEC</li> <li>Too many rules and regulations</li> <li>If you had a degree than no way</li> <li>They persuaded me to take Micro-automation</li> <li>Not my choice</li> <li>Pay for tuition, books, mileage over 15 miles</li> <li>Not friendly people</li> <li>They make you feel its your fault</li> <li>People would leave mad</li> <li>I did not like the VEC</li> <li>Do not pay for certain classes, floral design</li> <li>Extend unemployment until end of Trade Act</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great</li> <li>No hassle</li> <li>Pay for any retraining</li> <li>Buy computers</li> <li>Had a luncheon for all participants</li> <li>Gave gift certificates to grocery stores</li> <li>Minnie is a very generous lady</li> </ul>
							7. Participation
							Participated through both the Lane Foundation and VEC

Table D12. Both Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

Both Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	6. Information Cont.
Interview 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian</li> <li>• Workaholic</li> <li>• Persistent</li> <li>• Smart</li> <li>• Successful</li> <li>• Someone that takes Initiative</li> <li>• I do not complain</li> <li>• I love school</li> <li>• Encourage people</li> <li>• Optimistic</li> <li>• Motivator</li> <li>• Determined</li> <li>• Focused</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Blessed</li> </ul>	<p><u>Interviewee's Attitude</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I love school</li> <li>• I wanted it for my children and myself</li> <li>• I was fortunate to go back</li> <li>• Lane sent me to school</li> <li>• 2-year program at Ferrum College</li> <li>• 2-year program at Lane, CVCC</li> <li>• 3 year apprenticeship</li> <li>• All of this was good for me</li> <li>• I will finish my bachelors in May</li> </ul> <p><u>Others' Attitudes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mother Influenced me</li> <li>• Never complain</li> <li>• Be honest</li> <li>• Work hard</li> <li>• Take advantage of opportunities</li> <li>• Lane Company has been very good to me</li> <li>• Coworkers tried to persuade me not to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Going back and finishing school</li> <li>• Find a job after I finish school</li> <li>• I have a job lined up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School</li> <li>• Job at Lane</li> <li>• Advanced from production to management</li> <li>• Attended multiple training programs through Lane</li> <li>• Loved my experience at Lane 30 years</li> <li>• Laid off</li> <li>• School 4 year degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offered a job in Mississippi with Lane</li> <li>• I did not want to relocate because of my family</li> <li>• Through the Lane F. and VEC I got the opportunity to go to school</li> <li>• Before my family obligations prevented me from going</li> <li>• Coworkers tried to influence me not to go</li> <li>• I stayed focused and tried to encourage them</li> <li>• All things are possible through Faith and God</li> <li>• I displayed this to them</li> <li>• Barriers are selfish</li> <li>• There are a lot of people worse off than me</li> <li>• I made a campaign to help and encourage my coworkers to go back to school</li> </ul>	<p><u>VEC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presented at Lane</li> <li>• Training providers were their also</li> <li>• I went to a setting at the Armory</li> <li>• VEC helpful and nice</li> <li>• I worked with them on a individual basis</li> <li>• That was unique</li> <li>• I took the extra steps</li> <li>• Feel the human side</li> <li>• Most people do not</li> <li>• VEC needs to improve sessions</li> <li>• Not conducive to the learning process</li> <li>• Pushing people through</li> <li>• Need to have individual reps work with laid off people</li> <li>• Workers were not educated on what to do</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lane Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heard about through rumors</li> <li>• They made it known before, but nobody was for sure</li> <li>• I made the extra step and checked on it</li> <li>• I was the first to go through the process</li> <li>• Very easy</li> <li>• I stayed with Lane F. until I qualified under the Trade Act</li> <li>• I left Lane to free up funds for other people</li> <li>• Lane F. has better set up</li> <li>• Steve takes care of everything</li> <li>• All I did is show up to school</li> </ul> <p>7. Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated through both Lane Foundation and VEC</li> </ul>

Table D13. Both Group's Occurrences Found Related to the Links of Cross' Chain of Response Model

Both Group	1. Self-evaluation	2. Attitudes about Education	3. Importance of Goals	4. Life Transitions	5. Opportunities and Barriers	6. Information	6. Information Cont.
Interview 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smart</li> <li>Happy</li> <li>People person</li> <li>Part of the Lane family</li> <li>Layoff was not stressful</li> <li>Excited about the layoff</li> <li>Family helped me</li> <li>Husband had insurance</li> <li>Punctual</li> <li>Controlling</li> <li>Demanding</li> </ul>	<u>Interviewee's Attitude</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College after high school was just not my thing</li> <li>I was not ready</li> <li>School is stressful now because of their schedule and my kids</li> <li>Hard program</li> <li>I never studied in high school, but did well</li> <li>I am paying for it now...I really have to study</li> <li>I study hard and hope for the best</li> <li>Retraining for people is great</li> <li>I say, go for it!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School most important</li> <li>Motivation is money and flexible work schedule</li> <li>Found program in Roanoke only place in VA</li> <li>VEC did not want to pay for it</li> <li>I pushed them and they did</li> <li>Lane F. is helping me also</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High School</li> <li>CVCC</li> <li>Dropped out of school</li> <li>Moved to Myrtle Beach</li> <li>Moved back</li> <li>Teacher's certificate for Christian school 1 year</li> <li>Married</li> <li>Lane Company</li> <li>Laid off</li> <li>Excited about layoff</li> <li>School in Roanoke (Paramedic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job in Mississippi with Lane</li> <li>No way, less money, not moving my children, so they could keep it!</li> <li>School in Roanoke</li> <li>Lane F. and VEC are paying for my education</li> <li>Could not go with out their funding</li> <li>Family baby-sits</li> <li>Motivation is money and flexible work schedule</li> </ul>	<u>VEC</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had a meeting at Lane</li> <li>Confusing, no consistency</li> <li>Better in small groups</li> <li>Treat you like you taking their money</li> <li>It was our fault</li> <li>Example of woman...she said if it were up to her we would not get anything because we could type.</li> <li>They were very rude</li> <li>They try to be too controlling</li> <li>If you push you can get what you want, but most people don't</li> <li>Slow with paperwork</li> <li>Re-filed many times...not my fault</li> <li>Unemployment will not extend the entire time you are in school</li> <li>No expenses check...I drove too far.</li> <li>Needs better communication</li> </ul>	<u>Lane Foundation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heard from a friend</li> <li>Great! Better than VEC</li> <li>They help what the VEC does not pay</li> <li>People could abuse them</li> <li>Gave us gift certificates for groceries</li> </ul>
		<u>Others' Attitudes</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family was very supportive</li> <li>Instructors are supportive and understanding</li> <li>Friends went through the program and praised it</li> </ul>				<u>7. Participation</u> <p>Participated in both the Lane Foundation and VEC</p>	

## Appendix E

### Interview Questions and Interviewees' Comments

- Neither Group (p. 167)
- MBL Group (p. 180)
- VEC Group (p. 193)
- Both Group (p. 208)

Group I

Neither the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation nor Virginia Employment Commission Group

(Neither Group)



## *Neither Group*

The Neither Group represented three dislocated workers that chose not to participate in retraining and/or reemployment benefits funded by the MBL Foundation, or VEC, or both.

I. *Cross' Chain of Response Model*: Comprehensive model that explains adult participation in education.

A. *Self-Evaluation*: Category A displays how each interviewee perceived their ability levels.

1) Explain how you perceived your self-confidence in your former job or skills used at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee one:

I was very confident in my job, and looked forward to going to work. If it had not closed I would have retired from there. I stayed really busy, but when we had time to stop for a break, I got to be close to the ones that I worked with. We were a family at Lane.

b. Interviewee two:

I always felt confident in my job. People in other departments would call me to write reports for them because they had confidence in me. That made me feel good and really boosted my confidence in my skills

c. Interviewee three:

My job skills were very high. I have lots of experience in manufacturing and supervising. I really liked my job at Lane and would have retired from there if I had not been laid off.

2) Explain how you perceive your self-confidence in education.

a. Interviewee one:

I believe I can be successful in school because I did graduate from high school and community college. However, I really don't like school and I don't like to study.

b. Interviewee two:

I always felt confident in education. I would sometimes stress out over tests and papers, but I never thought about quitting or failing.

c. Interviewee three:

I really did not like high school, but made decent grades. I think I could be successful in school if I wanted to go back, but I do not. I did not worry about the layoff because I am confident that I am hard worker. There ain't much that I can't do with my hands.

B. *Attitudes About Education*: Category B represents the interviewees' attitudes about education.

1) Explain any educational programs in which you participated for your job at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee one:

I participated in a new payroll-training program at Lane. The training helped me qualify for my job after being laid off from Lane.

b. Interviewee two:

I participated in several seminars and training sessions. I really enjoyed and felt very confident in all of the training sessions Lane offered. I also conducted a training sessions with Lane's supervisors. I trained them on new aspects of the new paychecks they were going to receive.

c. Interviewee three:

I participated in a few training seminars at Lane for supervisors. We usually got free coffee and donuts. I liked that, but usually slept through the sessions.

2) Describe your educational experiences in school from youth to adulthood.

a. Interviewee one:

I really did not like school or studying. If an employer wanted me to go back to school, I would, but I will not seek more education on my own.

b. Interviewee two:

I definitely had good experiences. I really loved school as a youth.

c. Interviewee three:

I really hated school. I liked my shop and gym classes, but none of the other classes. I did fairly well in school though.

3) How do you feel about retraining as a solution to finding new employment?

a. Interviewee one:

I think retraining is good for people with no skills or want to change careers. I think these days you cannot make it with just a high school diploma.

b. Interviewee two:

I think retraining is great. I encourage anyone to do that. In today's society you need to have that education to get anywhere.

c. Interviewee three:

I think retraining is good for people who do not have any work skills or experience, but I think work experience is better than any kind of schooling.

4) Have you participated or plan to participate in a retraining program to find or qualify for a new occupation?

a. Interviewee one:

No. I always discuss any decisions with my husband. He thought I should take a job, so we would have steady income coming in. I already have a two-year degree and for me that's enough.

b. Interviewee two:

Yes. I am thinking about getting my Master's and even further one day. My motivation for going to school was that I did not want to be stuck in a clerical position for the rest of my life. I would look at the executives of Lane Company and say to myself, 'I want to do what they are doing. I want to make decisions and make a difference in this company'. I was really empowered and encouraged to go to college.

c. Interviewee three:

No. I understand that retraining can help people find jobs, but education should not be considered the only way to qualify for a job. I worked all my life and learned my skills from experience. Besides, my Dad worked forty years for Lane Company and retired in management with only high school.

C. *Importance of Goals:* Category C accounts for the dislocated workers' main goals after being laid-off.

1) Describe your most important goal after being laid-off.

a. Interviewee one:

The first thing I did after the announcement was go straight to my office, said a prayer, and called my pastor. I told him, 'The Lane Company just announced we are closing. I want you to pray for all the workers here'. After that, I concentrated on setting a budget and finding a new job.

b. Interviewee two:

I was working on my Bachelor's degree and my main goal was to finish that. I also needed to find a job before my last day at Lane, because I had made up my mind that I was not going on unemployment.

c. Interviewee three:

I wanted to make sure my family understood that everything was going to be all right and that I was going to find another job. I did that!

2) How have you accomplished or plan to accomplish that goal?

a. Interviewee one:

I put my full trust and life in the hands of the Lord. I think it would have been really hard if I had not trusted God and not attended church.

b. Interviewee two:

I took out student loans for my education. I am the type of person who feels like I can accomplish anything I set my mind on. I do not accept handouts.

c. Interviewee three:

I found another job through a friend.

3) If you participated or plan to participate in retraining to accomplish a goal, describe what you are expecting to gain from retraining. Also, explain why you believe retraining will accomplish that goal.

a. Interviewee one: Not attending. Has a job already.

b. Interviewee two:

Today, you just cannot find a job with advancement opportunities without a degree. I am also a woman trying to make it in a man's world. I felt like having a degree would level the playing ground and give me a fair chance.

c. Interviewee three: Not attending. Has a job already.

D. *Life Transitions*: Category D explains how life phases affect a person's decision to participate in education.

1) Reconstruct for me where you were, your emotions, and your future expectations when you received the news about the layoff.

a. Interviewee one:

I think I was more in shock and disbelief. The first thing I did after the announcement, I called my pastor. I said Dave, the Lane Company just announced that we are closing and I want you pray for all the workers here. Pray for everybody. After that, I called everybody in my family and I told them.

b. Interviewee two:

I will never forget that day. There was a rumor going around that something bad was going to happen. We didn't think the whole place was going to shutdown because they have had many layoffs before. I remember asking my supervisor and asking him "What is going on?" He said, "I can't tell you, but I can tell you that you will be all ok". (Laughter) That's what he told me. I can remember coming back to the office after the announcement and I just wanted to cry. It was just such a shock and I cried.

c. Interviewee three:

That morning I received a memo that there was to be a meeting in the warehouse. I had a bad feeling because that is where all of the other layoffs

were announced. I told my team, we were to attend a meeting at 3pm. We were all shocked and were in denial. For about a week we all thought they would change their minds, but they did not.

2) Describe how your family and friends reacted.

a. Interviewee one:

I called my Dad after talking with my pastor. He said afterwards he could see it coming. I then called my husband, my sister, and then I called my mom last because she doesn't feel sorry for me. She told me, "It is probably the best thing that will ever happen to you". I didn't want to hear that. Other than my Dad I think most of my family and friends were very shocked.

b. Interviewee two:

We never really believed it and my family could not believe it because the Lane Company started Altavista. They employed so many people and it was just a shock to everyone.

c. Interviewee three:

My family was shocked. I think the entire community was shocked. The Lane family started this town and Lane Company has been here forever.

3) Explain how your life has changed since the layoff.

a. Interviewee one:

A friend called and told me about a job at First National Bank. I talked with my husband, because we like to make decisions together. My husband told me, "I think you ought to take it. If you work until the end of Lane you know it will be until the end of December 2001 and if you go on unemployment you will get it for so long, then what?" I wasn't sure how all that worked. He said, "I rather you take this even if you are making a little bit less. Take it and at least we will have money coming in."

b. Interviewee two:

I had a job for a while at a construction company. I had a very difficult time adjusting; it just wasn't the Lane Company. I like to be organized and have order and that place wasn't like that. Now, I am working for two attorneys in Altavista. This is very different from what I have done. As far as my future goes, I would like to do something else. I would like to work for another company like Lane. A company that is big, has good benefits, and has a

corporate structure like Lane. I hope one day Altavista will have something like that.

c. Interviewee three:

Life was hectic at first. I didn't really know what to do. I was hoping to retire from Lane, like my Dad. I knew I would be ok because I have a lot of work skills. I talked to a friend of mine and he told me about a job in construction. I actually quit Lane Company before I was forced out.

4) Describe how you are coping with the layoff situation.

a. Interviewee one:

I think that if I had not been going to church and trusting in God, I would of really had a hard time. I remember singing a song...I like to sing in church. I sang a song for the Lane workers and myself in church. I sang it to remind myself that everything is going to be ok as long as we trust in God!

b. Interviewee two:

There were days that I would just cry. I talked to several people that said, "They would cry on their way to work and cry on their way home". I have done that too. I would pray a lot and ask God to give me guidance. I would also talk to friends that had been through the same thing.

c. Interviewee three:

I talked to my friends and my Dad. My Dad would tell me not to worry because another job would come along. He said during his time at Lane there were rumors of layoffs, but he never worried about it. If he had been laid off he would find another job doing something, even if it meant picking up trash. I believe in his motto: "It's not the job that pays the bills, it's the hard working man". You can't hold a good man down and I found another job.

E. *Opportunities and Barriers*: Category E represents the retraining or reemployment opportunities that each interviewee may have been presented during or after the layoff.

1) Explain any retraining or reemployment opportunities that have been presented to you since the announcement of the layoff.

a. Interviewee one:

My friend told me about a job at First National Bank. I asked my husband, 'what do you think I should do?' He said, 'I think you ought to take it.' I worked at the bank for about a year and my mother called me and told me about another job in Lynchburg doing payroll. The job offered better money and benefits, so I took it with agreement from my husband.

b. Interviewee two:

Lane offered me more money to stay on until they closed. I did work for Lane until one month before they closed. I found a job on my own and did not use the VEC. I also finished my Bachelors degree shortly after I left Lane for my new job. I really felt since I was about to finish my degree and had a lot of work experience that I had no need to seek services from the VEC or Lane Foundation.

c. Interviewee three:

I found out about a job in construction from a friend. I had no interest in retraining. I could not attend retraining anyway. I have two kids to feed and do not have the money to pay for school. I do not take handouts from people because I am a hard worker and can make it on my own.

2) Explain any barriers that could have or did prevent you from participating in retraining. How did you overcome those barriers?

a. Interviewee one:

I do not like to study, but if an employer wanted me to go back to school, I would. However, I will not seek more education on my own. It is not that I dislike teachers or other students; I just have other things that are more important to do. I am really active in my church a lot and that takes up all my free time.

b. Interviewee two:

Money would have been a barrier for me. However, I applied for student loans and was able to go. I do not like taking handouts from anybody. I guess I get that from my mother. When I was a child she really instilled into me to be independent and always work. Childcare would have been a major barrier if not for my family and paying for a babysitter.



c. Interviewee three:

I could not afford retraining and I was not about to take money from other people. I can support my family without the help of outsiders.

F. *Information:* Category F presents the information about the VEC and MBL Foundation that each interviewee recalled.

1) Describe what you know about the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).

How did you find out about the VEC?

a. Interviewee one:

The VEC also talked one day at Lane and set up 15-minute segments. They had different lines come in, the table line, chest line, and the ones in the office. They explained their benefits, but I think everything at the time was a little confusing. I think you can get two years for school. They pay for your books, travel, and so forth.

b. Interviewee two:

The VEC and CVCC came together to Lane and had a big meeting on surviving the layoff. I know you can go there and get help finding a job and apply for education benefits. I did go to the VEC to apply for some jobs, but found them not helpful. Their procedures are ridiculous. They treated me like I did not rate any benefits because I was educated. However, I was not seeking any benefits. I just wanted to apply for a job and the VEC was the only place where I could apply for it. I ended up not applying for the job. I would never go back to that place.

c. Interviewee three:

The VEC came to Lane and talked. That's all they did is talk. I know the VEC is where you can go to get unemployment and money for school. They make it seem it is going to be easy. I have friends who say it is a hassle. I am glad I didn't have to go through that.

2) Describe what you know about the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation. How did you find out about the MBL Foundation?

a. Interviewee one:

I heard some good things about that. We got a letter in the mail about that, not long after I left Lane. I thought that was wonderful what Minnie did. She is a wonderful person. In this world, most people are selfish and only care about themselves, but Minnie looks out for everybody else.

b. Interviewee two:

I found out about it and I think it's great. I helped send out the letters to all of the workers about the Lane Foundation. All of Lane's workers can get money for retraining with all expenses paid, books, tuition, computers, gas, anything. Minnie is a super and magnificent person.

c. Interviewee three:

I did not get any help through the Lane Foundation, but I hear they are helping people. I know Ms. Lane and she is a very good woman and cares about the workers of Lane Company.

3) Explain why you would or would not recommend the VEC to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve their services?

a. Interviewee one:

I would recommend the VEC if people want to go back to school or need help finding a job. I also think the VEC should have followed up with another meeting at Lane.

b. Interviewee two:

I would not recommend the VEC. They need to be clearer in presenting what benefits people rate. People turned down because they had education. It is not right to give to some and not others when they are suffering.

c. Interviewee three:

I really would not recommend the VEC. I understand some people really need unemployment with a lot of bills to pay. I think if the VEC was not such a hassle or had so much red tape to go through they could improve.

4) Explain why you would or would not recommend the MBL Foundation to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve their services?

a. Interviewee one:

I would recommend them to any lane worker who wanted to go back to school. I can think of no improvements.

b. Interviewee two:

No. I cannot recommend any suggestions to improve their services. I highly recommend anybody to go talk with Minnie Lane. She is so wonderful.

c. Interviewee three:

I guess if somebody did want to go back to school the Lane Foundation would be best. I hear they give money away like candy. Sounds good to me.

5) Explain why you did not attempt to seek retraining or reemployment benefits from either the VEC or MBL Foundation.

a. Interviewee one:

I did not want to go on unemployment. Others told me that the VEC was awful to deal with.

b. Interviewee two:

I do not take handouts when I can provide for myself. I did try to apply for a job through the VEC, but I was not seeking any type of benefits.

c. Interviewee three:

I found a job. I do not need education like some people with no skills. I have good work experience. I think that's enough.

6) What types of services or benefits would you recommend to be offered to dislocated workers?

a. Interviewee one:

They need a program to lead people through step by step and help them find a job. There maybe programs like that out there, but they need to be more available, or make it easier for those people to understand and encourage them to participate, less red tape.

b. Interviewee two:

I would like to see somebody step up and take lead from the VEC. I would like to see them offer funding for whatever curriculum you want to go into, whether it is nursing, or skills, or trades or whatever. They need to give more choices and encourage the people to do it.

c. Interviewee three:

I think they should stop these damn companies from putting Americans out of work. We keep sending our jobs overseas, and they do nothing but bomb us. I also think if the VEC would not hassle people with their confusing rules it would be better.

7) Would those services or benefits persuade you to participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation? Why?

a. Interviewee one:

No, because I found a job and really did not want to go to school.

b. Interviewee two:

Not really me because I think people who can do for themselves, should. However, I would encourage others to.

c. Interviewee three:

I would not participate unless I had too, regardless.

G. *Participation*: No data is collected for this category. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee.

a. Interviewee one: Non-participant in either organization.

b. Interviewee two: Non-participant in either organization.

c. Interviewee three: Non-participant in either organization.

Group II

Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation Group

(MBL Foundation Group)

*MBL Foundation Group*

The MBL Foundation Group represented three dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation.

I. *Cross' Chain of Response Model*: Comprehensive model that explains adult participation in education.

A. *Self-Evaluation*: Category A displays how each interviewee perceived their ability levels.

1) Explain how you perceived your self-confidence in your former job or skills used at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee four:

I felt confident most of the time, except when I got a hard customer on the phone. They can make you feel not so confident, but most of the time our supervisors backed us up. My job was difficult at first and I had to juggle answering the phones and doing paperwork.

b. Interviewee five:

I was very confident in my job. I wanted to be the best in my department, so I could get promotions. There were days where I would take on extra work or ask coworkers if I could help them finish their work. My boss always could depend on me to be on time and get the job done.

c. Interviewee six:

I felt very confident at work. People would come to me and ask me questions. I was the team leader and really worked hard.

2) Explain how you perceive your self-confidence in education.

a. Interviewee four:

My confidence level in high school was high because I never studied and still made A's. Now, in college I am very confident.

b. Interviewee five:

In high school, my confidence was high also. I made very good grades, but could not afford to go to college.

c. Interviewee six:

I hated high school and back then, I never saw a need for it, so I guess you can say my confidence in school was low.

B. *Attitudes About Education:* Category B represents the interviewees' attitudes about education.

1) Explain any educational programs in which you participated for your job at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee four:

No more than training with another customer service rep for about a month.

b. Interviewee five:

I took advantage of every training seminar that Lane offered. I attend many at Lane's facilities about production planning, a new pay roll system, sexual harassment, and many others. I also attended a computer basics class.

c. Interviewee six:

We had some safety meetings. They went over stuff like wearing safety glasses and first aid. I didn't really get much out of it. I mean, they are good for people who never worked before, but I felt I had been through those meetings a hundred times.

2) Describe your educational experiences in school from youth to adulthood.

a. Interviewee four:

I kind of goofed off in high school. If I knew what I know now, I would have done a lot better. I made good grades, but I never studied. In college you have to study and I just wasn't ready to go, but once you go back, that's when you know how important it is.

b. Interviewee five:

Oh! I loved school. When I was in high school I was an honor student and my teachers wanted me to go to college. I just could not afford to go. I got married shortly after high school and had children. It is really hard to go to school and take care of a family. I am doing it now with the help of the Lane Foundation.

c. Interviewee six:

I just did not focus in high school. I just wanted to make money and enjoy my life. My father and mother never had education and they did ok. I do understand that education is important. I tell my children that. They are smarter than me in the books, but have a lot to learn about the real world.

3) How do you feel about retraining as a solution to finding new employment?

a. Interviewee four:

I think education is a must for people who want to go further. I really did not want to be stuck in a factory for the rest of my life, so I thought I would go for something in the other direction and go back to school.

b. Interviewee five:

I think retraining can give a person more control over their direction in their career path. I could not afford college when I finished high school, but desired to go. I know that education is power and I want that power to advance in my career.

c. Interviewee six:

I realized after I dropped out of high school that I was not going get promoted to a supervisor. I had a decent job and made a decent living. Without a GED you just can't find what I used to have.

4) Have you participated or plan to participate in a retraining program to find or qualify for a new occupation?

a. Interviewee four:

I am going to CVCC for Medical Transcription. I really like the program. It is in high demand and I should find employment as soon as I finish. I wanted something with advancement opportunities. The layoff was just a good opportunity to go back to school.

b. Interviewee five:

I am attending night classes at CVCC. I am in the Microcomputer program. I really wanted to focus on what I already know and sharpen my office skills. I want a job where I can receive promotions for my skills and hard work. That is why I am going to school.



c. Interviewee six:

I did not really get retraining, but I did get my GED. I knew that I was going to need it for a job like I had at Lane.

C. *Importance of Goals:* Category C accounts for the dislocated workers' main goals after being laid-off.

1) Describe your most important goal after being laid-off.

a. Interviewee four:

My goal after the layoff was going back to school and getting a degree in something that I would not be laid off and had better advancement, so I went into the medical field.

b. Interviewee five:

My main goal was to find a job before my last day at Lane. I also wanted to attend college part time to improve my chances for promotions.

c. Interviewee six:

My goal was to find another job as quick as possible. I knew I was going to need my GED, so I guess you can say that was my first goal.

2) How have you accomplished or plan to accomplish those goals?

a. Interviewee four:

The Lane Foundation has helped me. The VEC was a waste of my time.

b. Interviewee five:

A friend of mine told me about a job at a medical facility in town. I applied and got it. I really like it and I make almost as much as I did at Lane. I am also attending college part time through the Lane Foundation. They pay for everything.

c. Interviewee six:

The Lane Foundation paid for my GED. I did that before I was laid off from Lane. A friend told me about a job in corrections. After I got my GED I applied and got hired.

3) If you participated or plan to participate in retraining to accomplish a goal, describe what you are expecting to gain from retraining.

a. Interviewee four:

I expect from my education a job that will give what I had at Lane with a little more money and benefits.

b. Interviewee five:

I hope that my education will help me get a fair shot at promotions.

c. Interviewee six:

My GED got me a job. It was no way I could get my job in corrections without it. It was part of the requirements.

D. *Life Transitions*: This category explains how life phases affect a person's decision to participate in education.

1) Reconstruct for me where you were, your emotions, and your future expectations when you received the news about the layoff.

a. Interviewee four:

Rumors had been floating around for a while. I was really kind of excited because I had decided to quit and go back to school. With the layoff I could get unemployment and go to school and not have to worry about work, so it kind of worked out in my favor.

b. Interviewee five:

I still remember the day like yesterday. My supervisor came and told me that we had a big meeting in the warehouse. I was so shocked when the Vice President announced we were closing down completely. I almost fell down in the warehouse. A friend of mine caught me and I cried and cried. We all cried. My boss cried. I do not think there was anybody that really expected that news.

c. Interviewee six:

I was actually late getting to the meeting. People were crying and telling me it was over. I was really not that surprised, but it was a very sad day. I wanted to find my wife because I know how she was. She is very emotional

and can be very loud when things don't go her way. She took it very bad. A lot of people took it bad. I didn't like it, but what can you do about it? I decided I was going to find another job somewhere and not worry about it.

2) Describe how your family and friends reacted.

a. Interviewee four:

My family was kind of excited because I would not have insurance. If you get unemployment you do not get any kind of benefits. My Granny was happy because I was going back to school. She thought that it would work out and I would be able to do that. Overall they were happy about me going back to school, but sad because the Lane Company was shutting down. Lane has been here forever.

b. Interviewee five:

I think my husband handled it better than I did. He is the type of person that nothing seems to bother him. My children were sad because I told them we were going to cut back on spending and no more new clothes and stuff. It's hard for children understand when they are used to having whatever they want. My friends were real supportive. I stayed in touch with those I worked with and we helped each other.

c. Interviewee six:

I thought my wife was going to hang herself. She cried all the time. I told her, "Look it is time get over this. Bad things happen everyday. We can't stop living because the Lane Company put us out of work". She finally came out of it and adjusted well. She is devoted to our church and I think that is what helped her. A friend from church told her about a job and helped her get on.

3) Explain how your life has changed since the layoff.

a. Interviewee four:

My life has changed dramatically since the layoff. I did not have any income for about a month after the layoff. It was tough and I bounced around a couple of jobs until I found one that would work around school. I can't wait to graduate from college, so I can have what I had at Lane again.

b. Interviewee five:

Life is very different today. I work in a medical office and deal with patients directly. It is different from what I was used to, but I really like it. I hope to

move up in this job or another company like Lane will hire me. I really miss Lane.

c. Interviewee six:

Earning my GED was something I should of done years ago, but I kept putting it off. I was sad when the layoff was announced, but it influenced me to go get my GED, so I could find another job. I work in corrections because of my GED.

4) Describe how you are coping with the layoff situation.

a. Interviewee four:

I was not depressed about the layoff. I did keep up with the other girls I worked with. We talked and gave each other phone numbers and e-mail addresses to keep in touch. Some of us kept in touch and some of us didn't, but overall I coped very well. I saw it as an opportunity to go into a new direction

b. Interviewee five:

I cried so many days, thinking, now what? My life was there and now it is all gone! My faith in Jesus and the support from my husband, family, and friends helped me pull through. I made up my mind I was going to find a job and go back school to provide me with a foundation to stand on if this happened to me again.

c. Interviewee six:

I guess I talked with my wife so much and tried to tell her everything was going to be ok that I did not really worry about myself. I did talk with my friends and family about it. A friend helped me get a job as well. Also, a lot of my family worked at Lane, so it really hit home. I think most of us have recovered ok. I have one cousin that is going to school full-time and another that was drawing unemployment. I think he was getting close to retirement anyway. We were really lucky to have our jobs at Lane for as long as we did.

E. *Opportunities and Barriers:* Category E represents the retraining or reemployment opportunities that each interviewee may have been presented during or after the layoff.

1) Explain any retraining or reemployment opportunities that have been presented to you since the announcement of the layoff.

a. Interviewee four:

I saw the layoff as my opportunity to go back to school.

b. Interviewee five:

I had an opportunity to get a job similar to what I did at Lane in a doctor's office. I also wanted to attend college part time.

c. Interviewee six:

I had an opportunity to get my GED through the Lane Foundation. I also found out about a job in corrections from a friend.

2) Explain any barriers that could have or did prevent you from participating in retraining. How did you overcome those barriers?

a. Interviewee four:

I had problems with the VEC and was denied funding, so money became a barrier. I went to the Lane Foundation and they paid for everything.

b. Interviewee five:

I did not qualify for any benefits through the VEC because I found another job. I checked with the Lane Foundation and they were very excited for me and have paid for all my expenses.

c. Interviewee six:

I found out that the VEC was not going to pay for anybody who wanted to get a GED. I also heard about the Lane Foundation from friends and received a letter in the mail about the Lane Education Trust Fund. I approached their staff and they took care of everything.

F. *Information:* This category presents the information that each interviewee knew about the VEC and MBL Foundation.

1) Describe what you know about the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).

How did you find out about the VEC?

a. Interviewee four:

The VEC set up at the Altavista Armory. It takes one week to receive an unemployment check. After four weeks of no pay I gave up. They never got my paperwork straight and they said the program I was in at CVCC did not qualify for funding. I believe my paper work ended up in file 13 (trash). They treated me like it was my fault that I was laid off! They just don't care!

b. Interviewee five:

The VEC came to Lane and talked to us. It was confusing because at the time we had just learned we were losing our jobs. Many of us were struggling with emotions. Talking in a large group seemed to bring out the worst in people. We needed more personal attention.

c. Interviewee six:

I attended a meeting at Lane, but found it very confusing. Those people do not care that you just lost your job. My friends also had some bad experiences. The VEC would lose their paper work and they were not paid.

2) Describe what you know about the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation. How did you find out about the MBL Foundation?

a. Interviewee four:

I gave them all of my receipts and they would reimburse me. They also got me a job at the YMCA and they are very flexible, so I can go to school.

b. Interviewee five:

The Lane Foundation was wonderful and they pay for full-time or part-time classes. Under the Trade Act you cannot work while you attend school.

c. Interviewee six:

I just went over and talked to the staff at the Lane Foundation and they took care of everything.

3) Explain why you would or would not recommend the VEC to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve?

a. Interviewee four:

I would not recommend them. It was not our fault we got laid off. I think overall they need better communication and to be considerate.

b. Interviewee five:

I would only recommend a person to go to the VEC if they had no other choice. The people over at the VEC need to be more caring.

c. Interviewee six:

No, but I think you do what you got to do, whether that is find a job on your own or draw unemployment through the VEC.

4) Explain why you would or would not recommend the MBL Foundation to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve?

a. Interviewee four:

Yes. The Lane Foundation will pay for anything that the VEC will not. I do not think they can improve their services.

b. Interviewee five:

Yes. They pay part or full time. There is no way to improve that.

c. Interviewee six:

Yes. They care about the community. No improvements there.

5) Explain why you chose the MBL Foundation and not the VEC to provide retraining or reemployment benefits.

a. Interviewee four:

They did not approve me, so I went with the Lane Foundation.

b. Interviewee five:

I did not qualify for benefits because I found a new job. The Lane Foundation was my only choice.

c. Interviewee six:

My supervisor told me that the VEC was not going to pay for a GED. The Lane Foundation was the only way I could get that.

6) What types of services or benefits would you recommend to be offered to dislocated workers?

a. Interviewee four:

Give people freedom to choose the program and help older workers. The VEC should work closer with those individuals.

b. Interviewee five:

I think they should offer part time programs for people that need to work. Also, insurance needs to be offered at lower rates for people who have been laid off.

b. Interviewee six:

I think we need to look at the companies taking away the jobs. They need to pay for the damage being done. We invested a lot of our time and hard work to make them rich. The VEC needs to pay for GEDs.

7) Would those services or benefits persuade you to participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation? Why?

a. Interviewee four:

I would have gone through the VEC if they would have worked with me, but they did not. The Lane Foundation is great.

b. Interviewee five:

Yea, I would have used the VEC if they had offered part time education benefits.

c. Interviewee six:

I would have tried the VEC first if they had paid for the GED. I would have still gone through the Lane Foundation if I had known about them first though.



G. *Participation*: No data is collected for this category. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee.

- a. Interviewee four: Participated in only the MBL Foundation.
- b. Interviewee five: Participated in only the MBL Foundation.
- c. Interviewee six: Participated in only the MBL Foundation.

Group III

Virginia Employment Commission Group

(VEC Group)

## *VEC Group*

The VEC Group represented four dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the VEC.

I. *Cross' Chain of Response Model*: Comprehensive model that explains adult participation in education.

A. *Self-Evaluation*: Category A displays how each interviewee perceived their ability levels.

1) Explain how you perceived your self-confidence in your former job or skills used at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee seven:

I was very confident in my job, but when we went to computers I was not so confident. I attended a training session on computers, but it was difficult and not hands on. I perceive myself as very confident whether in school or at work, but I prefer to have hands on instruction.

b. Interviewee eight:

I was very confident in my job. I could key stroke 220 strokes per minute. I knew my job up one side and down the other.

c. Interviewee nine:

I was very confident in my job skills. I went to Mississippi and trained people to do what we were doing in Altavista.

d. Interviewee ten:

I guess after thirty years of doing the same thing you get pretty good at it. I would say, I am very confident in my job skills.

2) Explain how you perceive your self-confidence in education.

a. Interviewee seven:

I was really a serious and confident student in high school. I always wanted to make straight A's in all my subjects.

b. Interviewee eight:

I was confident enough to make it through high school and graduate and could do it today if I had too.

c. Interviewee nine:

I loved high school and was an honor student, so my confidence in education is very high.

d. Interviewee ten:

I really did not like school. I liked my friends and playing sports, but I had to work and help my family. My confidence in school would be low.

B. *Attitudes About education*: Category B represents the interviewees' attitudes about education.

1) Explain any educational programs in which you participated for your job at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee seven:

I remember going to a computer class in Lynchburg. I learned nothing because it was not hands on training.

b. Interviewee eight:

Nothing at Lane, I learned to keypunch at Stanley Town. I picked it up easily and loved it.

c. Interviewee nine:

I learned a lot of computer programs at Lane, such as Word and Excel. They were not difficult.

d. Interviewee ten:

I went through a supervisor-training course at Lane. I did not take it as serious as others may have. I knew my job and how to manage people already. I did not need a training course.

2) Describe your educational experiences in school from youth to adulthood.

a. Interviewee seven:

I really liked school as a youth. My mother and father finished high school and encouraged me to finish and go to college. I had planned to attend college, but got married instead and never regretted it.

b. Interviewee eight:

My mother and father did not go to school, but they encouraged us to go. I did well in high school, but have never used any of it except for typing and bookkeeping.

c. Interviewee nine:

I loved school as a youth and attended a lot of training sessions at Lane Company. I also trained people at Lane.

d. Interviewee ten:

When I was in high school I did not concentrate on it. I had to work before and after school. I was lucky that I finished.

3) How do you feel about retraining as a solution to finding new employment?

a. Interviewee seven:

I think retraining is great for younger people who have time to utilize their education. I would be pursuing it if I were single and younger.

b. Interviewee eight:

I think retraining is good if a person is young. It also depends on what the person wants to do.

c. Interviewee nine:

I think retraining is good. If a person cannot find a job I recommend them to take advantage of the retraining benefits and attend school.

d. Interviewee ten:

I think education is overrated. However, I do think a young person needs it today to get a good job. That's a real shame.

4) Have you participated or do you plan to participate in a retraining program to find or qualify for a new occupation?

a. Interviewee seven:

If I were younger I would go back to school. My husband makes enough to support us, so I am blessed.

b. Interviewee eight:

No. I do not plan on going back to school, unless I forced to. I am too old for school.

c. Interviewee nine:

I was going to go back to school if I could not find a job first. My family was very supportive of me going back to school. I did not have to worry about money because of my husband's income.

d. Interviewee ten:

My father never finished high school, but owned a farm and made enough to take care of his family. Education helps a person, but it doesn't mean he knows anything about work. I am too old to go back to school anyway. I just need to work a couple more years and I can draw Social Security.

C. *Importance of Goals:* Category C accounts for the dislocated workers' main goals after being laid-off.

1) Describe your most important goal after being laid-off.

a. Interviewee seven:

My goal after the layoff was to find out God's will in my life and help my son. My son's wife had cancer and died. They had two small children and my son needed help, so for my work to end was God's will.

b. Interviewee eight:

My main goal was to take care of my ailing mother. I also wanted to draw unemployment and to make out until I could draw social security. As of now my mother died and I am helping other family members. My unemployment has run out, but I think I can make it until July when I can draw social security.

c. Interviewee nine:

My goal was to find was to find another job. I decided to draw unemployment for six months, and if I did not find a job I was going to attend school.

d. Interviewee ten:

I needed to find work because I am not old enough to draw social security. I drew unemployment until it run out and went without for a few months. It was tough, but I owned my house and my neighbors would help me especially with my wife's cancer. I just did not know what I was going to do. My wife was older and already drawing social security. That was good because I just do not know what would have happened to us with no income at all. I finally found a job working in furniture again.

2) How have you accomplished or plan to accomplish that goal?

a. Interviewee seven:

I drew unemployment and had to look for two jobs per week. I would do my job hunt during the first part of the week and at the end of the week I would go up and stay with my son and help out.

b. Interviewee eight:

After I was laid off I drew unemployment until it ran out. I helped my mother until she recently died and now I try to help my other family members. I will get to draw unemployment in July. I saved, so I think I can make it.

c. Interviewee nine:

I accomplished my goals by just looking for a job. I found a job at an insurance company doing customer service.

d. Interviewee ten:

There is a small furniture company in Lynchburg. A friend of mine that used to work at Lane years ago was working there and he helped me get on. If not for me knowing somebody, I just don't think I would have been hired. Nobody wants to hire a man in his fifties approaching retirement. I really understand that, but think that most companies hire and fire people all the time. What is the difference if they hire me for a few years and then I retire? I may even put in another ten or so years. I like to work and really do not want to retire if I am able to work. I really enjoy it.

D. *Life Transitions*: Category D explains how life phases affect a person's decision to participate in education.

1) Reconstruct for me where you were, your emotions, and your future expectations when you received the news about the layoff.

a. Interviewee seven:

That day was just like any normal day. I think all of us were really in a state of shock. Everybody's first words were, "Lane Company!! It's always been in Altavista! We're not going to lose Lane Company!" I made of my mind right that very day, I said, "I am going to ride it out and stay here to the end", but I was sad.

b. Interviewee eight:

I wasn't surprised. We just didn't expect it quite as fast as it come about. I really did not get upset because I was expecting it and I am lucky that I am close to retirement. On the day of the layoff we were busy as usual. There was nothing special about the day except they fired all of us.

c. Interviewee nine:

The announcement was at three o'clock. I was like, "Oh my God! What is this? I can't believe this!" I was in shock. When I got back to my desk, I called my husband and as soon as he spoke I burst into tears. I really don't think I have ever experienced anything as devastating. The Lane Company is what the town was built around. The last day I worked there I cried until I was sick. I was not any sicker the day I got the news my mother died. When I walked out the front door I cried all the way home. I had to pull over twice on the way home because I got so upset crying.

d. Interviewee ten:

That was a day I will never forget. I was not surprised since I was going back and forth to Rocky Mount. We were called into the warehouse and management announced that Lane was shutting down this time for good and we would all lose our jobs. I was really mad because I was not old enough to retire. People don't want to hire an old man. I remember seeing a lot of people crying and saying, "What are we going to do?" I was thinking the same thing. We really did not know how good we had it until it was over.



2) Describe how your family and friends reacted.

a. Interviewee seven:

My family was shocked because they all lived around here. Everybody thought that Lane Company would be here forever.

b. Interviewee eight:

I think everybody was shocked, but was expecting it.

c. Interviewee nine:

My family was fine. My husband is one of those who don't worry. He said, "We will be fine, no big deal". I was like, "Oh my God! I am losing my new house! What am I going to do"? My daughter's first reaction was, "Oh my God! I am going to have to quit school! I got two more years"! God works things out and we are ok.

d. Interviewee ten:

It was a hard time for my family because my wife had cancer and she died shortly after the layoff. We were all depressed.

3) Explain how your life has changed since the layoff.

a. Interviewee seven:

My transition after the layoff has been good. I was sad of course, but my son needed me after his wife passed away.

b. Interviewee eight:

I drew unemployment for as long as I could and now only have a few months until I can draw social security. I want to retire and continue to help my family and friends.

c. Interviewee nine:

Nobody can talk about it unless you been through it. Its like part of your life is gone, and it is. I cannot even ride by the building now. It makes me sick. It's just so devastating and it seems like nobody really cares. You know they do care, but the ones that did this to us, they really don't care. They have no idea the impact that it has had on this town, and no one can say it hasn't impacted the whole town, financially as well other ways, creating depression and anger.

d. Interviewee ten:

It really changed after the layoff. I put a lot of years in at Lane and I really miss it. The layoff changed my life in a negative way. I am too old to go back to school and employers do not like to hire older people. I work for a furniture producer in Lynchburg.

4) Describe how you are coping with the layoff situation.

a. Interviewee seven:

I think for a person that doesn't believe in prayer or God to help us in these times, I don't know how you would get through it. I think he will provide a way.

b. Interviewee eight:

I just take one day at a time. I have been so busy I really haven't had time to think about it.

c. Interviewee nine:

I have kept in touch with some of them I work with in customer service. I also baby-sit my granddaughter to take my mind off of the layoff. I also talk to friends, family, and attend church.

d. Interviewee ten:

I talked with friends a lot. We would get together and drink a couple of cold beers and talk about the old days. My neighbors were really good while I was going through my wife's cancer. They would bring us food all the time.

E. *Opportunities and Barriers*: Category E represents the retraining or reemployment

opportunities that each interviewee may have been presented during or after the layoff.

1) Explain any retraining or reemployment opportunities that have been presented to you since the announcement of the layoff.

a. Interviewee seven:

I have had no job or retraining opportunities presented to me since the layoff except for the Trade Act or Lane Foundation. I do not think anybody that I have talked to has even been hiring. If they had an opening I do not think it would have been my age. I think they're just looking for someone to do a

good job. I have heard men state that they thought it was age discrimination. I have not heard any women say this.

b. Interviewee eight:

The only opportunity I have had is unemployment compensation. It has run out, but I think I can manage. I think age may have a part in the hiring of a person, but I never felt any discrimination, but I have heard from a man friend of mine, he is 58. I think they should help people be able to retire earlier now days, especially after 55 years old.

c. Interviewee nine:

I had the opportunity to attend school through the Trade Act and Lane Foundation, but found a job first. I drew unemployment and used their services to find a job. I did not feel my age had any bearing on me finding employment, but I did hear a male say that.

d. Interviewee ten:

I did not have any opportunities for a job or retraining after I was laid off. I guess you might say I could have gone to school through the Trade Act or Lane Foundation, but I was not interested because of my age. I drew unemployment until it ran out, just short of a year, I think. I never had a problem getting an employer to sign my book because they did not want to hire me. I had one manager of a company tell me they were looking for people who were going to be around for years to come. That made me mad! He knew it, and said that it was not my age, but they were looking for people to place in their management trainee program, and that I was over qualified. I told him, "I was a supervisor for thirty years. You do not have to train me! I have experience"! If that is not age discrimination then I do not know what it is! However, I did find a job working in the furniture industry again. I advise or supervise production of furniture. I hope this job will carry me until retirement.

2) Explain any barriers that could have or did prevent you from participating in retraining. How did you overcome those barriers?

a. Interviewee seven:

There are no barriers really. I could go if I wanted to, but I am too old. I have been so wrapped up helping my son that I have had no time to think about such things.

b. Interviewee eight:

I really stay busy with family. There is something always going on. My grandchildren worry me to death. I am also taking care of my mother's estate. Also, my first cousin has cancer.

c. Interviewee nine:

I have no barriers and was planning on going to school if I had not found a job. Money could have been a barrier, but the Trade Act or Lane Foundation would have helped there.

d. Interviewee ten:

No barriers. I just did not want to go. I am too old and by the time I would finish school I would be retiring anyway. I need to work.

F. *Information:* Category F presents the information that each interviewee knew about the VEC and MBL Foundation.

1) Describe what you know about the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).

How did you find out about the VEC?

a. Interviewee seven:

The VEC came to our workplace and talked to us before we left. They told us what we needed to do and they were very informative. I think that was very good. It was not bad or hard as to what you had to do to get signed up for it. I have not had any bad experience with this. Most employers will tell you whether they are interested or not.

b. Interviewee eight:

The VEC came and talked to us at Lane Company. I also went to Lynchburg to sign up for my unemployment compensation and attend a four-hour seminar. The seminar was clear and straightforward. I did not mind the long lines because I expected that. The thing that bothered me the most was the cost of unemployment insurance. I could not afford it.

c. Interviewee nine:

I cannot complain about unemployment compensation, but I can about their staff. They assume you know everything about them. The VEC did not have enough people helping. They also made us feel like the layoff was our fault

and that we asked for this. In one case I saw one of the VEC staff being rude to a mother with children. They said, "Get your child off that". I know it must be disgusting to them having children there, but if you are unemployed you can't afford a babysitter. What are you suppose to do with them?

d. Interviewee ten:

The VEC was a real pain. I did not like looking for two jobs every week. I found it embarrassing. I thought the procedures were confusing and the people not understanding. I asked them what I was suppose to do when signing up. The lady said, 'Didn't you get information on that at Lane?' If I had known I would not had asked. I do feel like my compensation was fair, but insurance took a lot of it.

2) Describe what you know about the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation. How did you find out about the MBL Foundation?

a. Interviewee seven:

I know that the Lane Foundation is helping people retrain for new job.

b. Interviewee eight:

They have bought people new computers and paid for retraining. Minnie Lane told us, "For many years you all helped my family put food on our tables and now I want help you put food on yours". She is so sweet.

c. Interviewee nine:

Minnie Lane has a genuine concern for the people. The Lane Foundation is providing funds for retraining and buying new computers for people.

d. Interviewee ten:

Minnie and B.B. Lane were good people. They cared about Altavista.

3) Explain why you would or would not recommend the VEC to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve their services?

a. Interviewee seven:

Yes, I would. They are very helpful and provide an unemployed person with income. The only thing that I can say they could improve is their long line.

b. Interviewee eight:

Yes, people should get unemployment if they are not working. You just have to expect to wait in line. Something needs to be done about insurance.

c. Interviewee nine:

I would not recommend them. They need to help more on a personal level. They assume that you know everything about them.

d. Interviewee ten:

I recommend them if a person has no income. I did not like dealing with them, but I had no choice. I think they need to be more understanding.

4) Explain why you chose the VEC and not the MBL Foundation to provide retraining or reemployment benefits.

a. Interviewee seven:

I was not going back to school. I just needed unemployment.

b. Interviewee eight:

I just wanted to draw unemployment until I could retire.

c. Interviewee nine:

I needed unemployment for an income. I also was going back to school and would have gone to the Lane Foundation, but I found a job first.

d. Interviewee ten:

I just wanted a job and unemployment. I had no plans of going to school.

5) Explain why you would or would not recommend the MBL Foundation to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve?

a. Interviewee seven:

I would recommend it for anybody going back to school. I have read they are really easy to deal with. I really do not know how they could improve their services.

b. Interviewee eight:

I would recommend them. They are doing a lot of good. I do not know enough about them to say what they can do to improve.

c. Interviewee nine:

I would recommend them. They are helping people with everything and with no hassle compared to the VEC. The VEC will not buy computers.

d. Interviewee ten:

I guess if the person wants school than the Lane Foundation would be a good way to go. They pay for whatever the VEC would not.

6) What types of services or benefits would you recommend to be offered to dislocated workers?

a. Interviewee seven:

We need to give our people a fair chance. I think that some of our people could be asked, "Would you work for less to have your job back"?

b. Interviewee eight:

I would put a stop to it to taking our jobs and sending them overseas. What's the point of sending it back over here? Who has got the money to buy it?

c. Interviewee nine:

I think a little more warning. Give people time to prepare for the layoff, and make those companies who do this pay for it.

d. Interviewee ten:

I would stop these damn companies from leaving the states. We worked hard to make Lane the best, and they reward us by laying us off. The VEC needs to help people and not treat them like it was our fault.

7) Would those services or benefits persuade you to participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation? Why?

a. Interviewee seven:

If I had planned on going back to school I would have checked into the Trade Act and Lane Foundation.

b. Interviewee eight:

No. I was not going back to school.

c. Interviewee nine:

I would have gone to the Lane Foundation if I had not found a job.

d. Interviewee ten:

I would not have gone to the Lane Foundation unless the Lanes were going back into the furniture business because I was not going to school.

G. *Participation*: No data is collected for this category. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee.

a. Interviewee seven: Participated in only the VEC.

b. Interviewee eight: Participated in only the VEC.

c. Interviewee nine: Participated in the VEC.

d. Interviewee ten: Participated in the VEC.



Group IV

Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation and Virginia Employment Commission Group

(Both Group)

## *Both Group*

The Both Group represented three dislocated workers that participated in retraining and/or reemployment programs funded by the MBL Foundation and VEC.

I. *Cross' Chain of Response Model*: Comprehensive model that explains adult participation in education.

A. *Self-Evaluation*: Category A displays how each interviewee perceived their ability levels.

Interviewee eleven was very confident in his job and education.

1) Explain how you perceived your self-confidence in your former job or skills used at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee eleven:

I was very confident in my job. I have a philosophy. If you want to make more money, you should work like you want to be paid.

b. Interviewee twelve:

In every job that I have had I have been promoted to a managers job. I have 15 years plus experience in management and feel very confident.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I was very confident in my skills. I was not afraid of computers like some people were at Lane. I was on track to become a supervisor.

2) Explain how you perceive your self-confidence in education.

a. Interviewee eleven:

I feel very confident and I love school. Right now I have a 4.0 average, so I really enjoy going. I have always liked learning. Most people that have been at Lane as long as me do not want to go back to school, but me, I look forward to it and I have been very successful.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I feel very confident. I graduated from CVCC with a 4.0 average. A lot of people in my classes were older students and they felt like the school owed

them something. I would speak out in class and say I wanted to be challenged and did not want a handout.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I really was confident in high school. I never studied, but did very well. Once I finished high school I went to college, but dropped out because I was not ready for it. Today, I am back in school and I study very hard and do very well.

B. *Attitudes About Education*: Category B represents the interviewees' attitudes about education.

1) Explain any educational programs in which you participated for your job at Lane Company.

a. Interviewee eleven:

Lane gave me many opportunities for school. I attended a two-year program through Ferrum College. They also sent me to CVCC for a two-year program. After that I did a three-year apprenticeship through the Virginia Apprenticeship Council in Richmond, VA. I completed all of the programs and was only two years away from finishing my four-year degree.

b. Interviewee twelve:

Lane Company offered us some general classes on computers, but they were very basic. I had a lot of experience when I got to Lane, so I did not really pursue any training through Lane. I did train all the customer service representatives.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

Other than just training for my job at Lane I did not participate in any training at Lane. That was easy.

2) Describe your educational experiences in school from youth to adulthood.

a. Interviewee eleven:

I really loved high school and always wanted to go back to school. I had to work to be able to provide for my family and send my children to school. It's hard to take time for yourself and I was fortunate to go back. It has been a blessing in disguise and I am doing great in school.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I really loved high school and it was a lot of fun. I was a good student, but I did not desire to go to college after high school. I got married and went to work. I have been very successful in college and really appreciate my knowledge that I have acquired, but I feel my work experience is really what counts.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

In high school I never had to study, but now I have to study and pay attention in class. I feel confident that I will be successful and graduate because I work hard in school and that is what it takes.

3) How do you feel about retraining as a solution to finding new employment?

a. Interviewee eleven:

I feel retraining or going back to college, or getting a GED or high school diploma is essential in today's economy. I really felt for those people at Lane and encouraged them to retrain. I really felt good about that because they did not know how to go through the process of getting into school.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I think retraining is great and I recommend everybody to take advantage of the Trade Act or the Lane Foundation. I do not feel sorry for people who do not. The opportunity is there. I think education is good, but work experience is best. I do not agree with hiring people just because they have been to school. There are plenty of people that have good work skills and do not need school.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I think it is great, especially for people like me. I got married young and started my family young. I thought that's where I wanted to be at the time, but things change. I just say, go for it!

4) Have you participated or plan to participate in a retraining program to find or qualify for a new occupation?

a. Interviewee eleven:

I will graduate with my Bachelors this May. The layoff has provided me with the opportunity to accomplish my life long dream.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I have been through two college programs. The first program I did was a floral design program online through Professional Business Careers in Georgia. After I finished that program I did not look for job in that field, but entered into another program at CVCC. I really wanted a real college degree just for myself. I wanted to prove that I could be successful in college. I did not do it to improve my chances for another job because I have the proper experience for that. I did it for myself and I was successful.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I am going for a paramedic degree in Roanoke. I have friends that went through the program and they are doing very well. The motivation is for money and flexible work schedule. In this career I will only work ten days a month, so that's where I want to be.

C. *Importance of Goals:* Category C accounts for the dislocated workers' main goals after being laid-off.

1) Describe your most important goal after being laid-off.

a. Interviewee eleven:

Going back to school. The layoff provided me the opportunity to do something I had been putting off for years.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I wanted to go back to school and excel at it. I wanted to prove that I could be successful in college.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I wanted to go back to school, so I could have a stable career and make good money.

2) How have you accomplished or plan to accomplish that goal?

a. Interviewee eleven:

I have been able to go to school because of the Lane Foundation and the Trade Act through the VEC. I was the first individual to go through the Lane Foundation. They were great and handled everything. All I did is show up for class. I also went to the VEC, so I could free up some funds at the

Lane Foundation for other people. I went to a setting at the Armory in Altavista to see if I qualified for the Trade Act. I think the Lane Foundation had the better deal with no hassle, but I cannot complain about the VEC.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I went to the Lane Foundation because the VEC would not pay for Floral Design. Under the Trade Act only certain programs are paid for. I also got a new computer from the Lane Foundation, so I could attend the classes online. They were wonderful. I went through the VEC to attend CVCC.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I found out about the paramedic program from friends. I was also approved for the Trade Act through the VEC. They would not pay for some things like my gas, uniforms, and little extra stuff. I received funding from the Lane Foundation for those things and also got a new computer.

- 3) If you participated or plan to participate in retraining to accomplish a goal, describe what you are expecting to gain from retraining. Also, explain why you believe retraining will accomplish that goal.

a. Interviewee eleven:

My education is providing me with more experience and knowledge about the economy. I hope that I can share this knowledge with other people and businesses to improve their lives and business. I have a job lined up after I finish school, and I think my education will bring a level of excellence to the company. They need experienced and educated people to lead the company into this unstable economy.

b. Interviewee twelve:

My goal is more personal than for job related reasons. I am glad I can put it down on my resume, but my experience is what I think employers really look at.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I am expecting to get a job as a paramedic. The only way I know to get this job is to go through a program like this.

*D. Life Transitions:* Category D explains how life phases affect a person's decision to participate in education.

1) Reconstruct for me where you were, your emotions, and your future expectations when you received the news about the layoff.

a. Interviewee eleven:

By me working in management, I kind of knew. When I got down to the warehouse I could see the impact on everyone. I tried to encourage some people and made an effort to reach out to them. I knew so many people like myself that had been there for so long. They were like my family and I could see people crying and hurting. I really felt for them, but I knew it was not the end of the world. Some people had only been working two days a week. I thought by closing, it would be an opportunity for them to retrain and go someplace else. I told many people, "This is the opportunity that you need. The Lane Foundation let them know at that time they were going to help people, so I spoke to folk as it would be an opportunity.

b. Interviewee twelve:

Well, it was not a big shock. We began to hear rumors of this major reconstruction 1 1/2 years before. On the day of the announcement I actually heard from another company that we were closing. Immediately all the people that worked for me came to me and I said, "I know nothing, nobody has told me anything". After the formal announcement the Vice President of my department called all of us into our showroom. It was the first time I had ever seen a man in tears. We were all very sad.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I was excited and wanted to go back to school. Some people felt stressed because they were older and they were afraid they would not get hired because of their age. I knew an older man that worked in the plant. He said he did know what he was going to do because he was too old to go back to school and nobody was going to hire him because Lane was all he knew. A lot of couples worked there and they were worried about insurance. I was lucky because my husband had insurance on us. I was not worried about money because I knew I could draw unemployment and I knew they would send me back to school.

2) Describe how your family and friends reacted.

a. Interviewee eleven:

My family and friends were sad and concerned for me, but I was determined not to be sad. My family and I attend church and I am a strong Christian. God will guide me. It is his will for a change in my life and I accepted it. I will not dwell in the past or waste on minute of my life with sadness. I displayed this to my family and friends. I think my view of looking up and not down motivated my family and friends to feel better.

b. Interviewee twelve:

My husband was very optimistic. He actually was laid off shortly after I was from Times Fiber. I was hysterical and said, "What are we going to do? We will lose everything"! He was very calm and said, "Tomorrow I will go sign up for unemployment and find another job". Thank God for his calmness! Within one month he had found another job and we were fine. He told me to do whatever I wanted. I could go to school or go to work. I am blessed to have such a wonderful man. My daughter complained because we were poor while we were both out of work. I think it was a good lesson for her to experience. I think she realizes where the money comes from now.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

They were not really worried about it because I drew unemployment. I make more money now than I did when I was working for Lane.

3) Explain how your life has changed since the layoff.

a. Interviewee eleven:

I work for a small stained glass company as an unpaid internship. Under the Trade Act I cannot work a job and get paid. I wanted to do it because they needed me to help. I am really good at writing proposals. It's like a gift I have. I told the gentleman that owns the company that I would help him out a couple days a week. He said if I finish school and wanted to go to work for him, I had a job. I also wanted to have something to write about in school.

b. Interviewee twelve:

Since the layoff I have graduated from two college programs. I also have worked several jobs. I went to work for Kelly Employment Services. I actually took that job so I could find out the best places to work. Next, I worked for a financial company in Lynchburg. I will have to say that is the



most professional organization that I have ever seen. I am more of a relaxed person and like to joke around with people, and they were not like that. After that, I took a job as a 911 dispatcher, but the drive was too far, so I applied at a local electrical company in Altavista. I just started there this week and love it. I do pay roll and it has an atmosphere like Lane. However, I still want to make those flower arrangements one day.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

It is more stressful now because of the scheduling of my classes. I have to leave 1 1/2 hours early, so I can get a parking place at school. I am in the paramedic program and as part of the training we work with the fire departments and hospitals. Sometimes I'll have a 12, 18, or 24-hour shift. I really do not like being away from my kids and on occasions they are away from me sometimes three or four nights during the week, but my instructors are really supportive. The first day I told them if I was late it was because of my children. My children come first in my life.

4) Describe how you are coping with the layoff situation.

a. Interviewee eleven:

I trust the Lord for everything. Before the announcement my day was a good day. Some people let one statement change how they feel about life, and I was determined not to let one statement change my outlook on life. It's still a good day. The sun is still shining and I am still breathing. It's still going to be a great day. This is just one incident in a great day.

b. Interviewee twelve:

After the announcement I tried to pull my department together and talk with them about it. I said I know how you feel and I lived through it before. I said, as bad as it is, you're going to be all right, you will find another job, and it's nothing we can do about this. The emotions went from being very hurt, tearful, and then anger set in. They would say, "Well, I am not going to do anything else. I'm not going to answer these telephones". They even had resentment towards people they had never met in Mississippi. Basically, it was up to me to pull them back together. I said, "When we walk out the door in November, we will walk out of here knowing that we did the best job we could until the last day we were here. We did not build the best department in Lane by letting all of this get to us. We worked too hard for it. That's all we got left, to walk out here knowing that you did the best job you could". That's what we basically did. I also have tremendous faith in God. I believe he has a plan for everybody and that everything will workout.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I really never got upset over the layoff. I did try to talk to others though. I got to know some of the older people I worked with. They were upset and would say, "Its no need for me to go back to school." I would tell them, "You are never too old to go back to school. When I was at CVCC there were people that were 70 years old in my music appreciation class." They were afraid of not getting hired because of their age. I would say the younger ones were excited and supported the older ones.

E. *Opportunities and Barriers*: Category E represents the retraining or reemployment opportunities that each interviewee may have been presented during or after the layoff.

1) Explain any retraining or reemployment opportunities that have been presented to you since the announcement of the layoff.

a. Interviewee eleven:

I look at the layoff as a major opportunity. It is an opportunity for me to go back to school and finish my degree. I found out about my new job from a friend at church. God has a plan and purpose for all of us, and it is up to us to recognize this and follow his lead. I am very blessed and thankful for my opportunities.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I was offered a job with Furniture Brands International in Mississippi. Also, the VEC and Lane Foundation provided me the opportunities to go back to school.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I found out about the paramedic program from friends. I also applied at the VEC for Trade Act to pay for it. The Lane Foundation paid for everything else that the Trade Act did not pay for.

2) Explain any barriers that could have or did prevent you from participating in retraining. How did you overcome those barriers?

a. Interviewee eleven:

Money could have been a barrier, but my friends at the Lane Foundation and the VEC helped me. I also had friends tell me, "You're not going to get a job

like you had.” I had a real good job and was really blessed me at Lane. I worked in Human Resources and I was the only one that did not have a degree. For a person that just come out of high school and only attended Lane's training programs, I thought that was a real blessing for me. A lot of people saw that and tried to make me feel that I would never do that again. I displayed that all things are possible with faith. I just felt for everyone else, but not for myself. Sometimes when you take time to feel for others you cannot have a lot of time to think about yourself. Personally, I think, when you face barriers, it's selfish. There were a lot of people that are worse off than myself. I felt for those people and wanted to encourage them to retrain. In those times I felt like I was not going to be successful in school or finding another job I would help those who were worse off than me. I am blessed with a very positive outlook and my strength is through the grace of God, and not of my own.

b. Interviewee twelve:

Money would have been the biggest barrier if not for the Lane Foundation or the Trade Act. My opportunity that I had to work in Mississippi was prevented because of my family. I would have really liked to give that a chance, but it was not an even considered as an option by my family.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

If it were not for my family babysitting for me I would of had problems. There would have been no way I could afford to have two kids in day care. That would've been the biggest barrier. Also, if the VEC and Lane Foundation would not have paid for it, I would not have been able to go either.

F. *Information:* Category F presents the information about the VEC and MBL Foundation that each interviewee recalled.

1) Describe what you know about the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).

How did you find out about the VEC?

a. Interviewee eleven:

The VEC provides unemployment compensation and helps people that want to retrain. They had a meeting at Lane and told us they were going to set up at the Armory. The information presented at the sessions at Lane and the Armory was very basic. They were very busy and had a lot of people to deal with. I made an effort to establish a relationship with at least one person at the VEC. I worked very closely with the Trade Act coordinator and we had

a good rapport. I do not think other people did that. I was very aware of my benefits and anytime that I had questions I could call the coordinator and she would help me. The VEC is paying for me to get my four-year degree. I was able to do that because I had enough credits for my first two years, so all I needed was two more. As long as you can finish within two years they will pay for it.

b. Interviewee twelve:

They did come to Lane and there was a meeting held at the Armory. It took forever to find out if the Trade Act covered us. Their requirements were very strict for those who qualified for retraining benefits. They made it seem like if you had a degree, then you were getting nothing. They made you feel like you should be able to find a job with what you had, and there were a lot of disappointed people at Lane. I was approved under the Trade Act. It was not that hard, but I deal with paper work a lot and I know others found the process confusing. I received unemployment and money from the Trade Act. I do not think much of the VEC. I did not have many problems because I am used to dealing with rude people as I did in customer service.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

They had a meeting at Lane and the Armory. They made us feel like we were taking money out of their pocket and it was our fault. My group had this woman that said she would rather be smoking a cigarette than helping us. She said, "If I had my way, all of you would be back behind a desk. Y'all do not need retraining if you can type." I looked at her and said, "You don't pay my bills! You don't raise my kids!" It just flew through me and she was very rude. She said, "We will be hand picking your curriculum and it has to go through us." It's none of their business what I plan to do. That is the reason why I pushed the paramedic program. I know there were a lot of people that just settled for what the VEC wanted. No! Not me! I pushed it and got what I wanted!

2) Describe what you know about the Minnie and B.B. Lane Foundation (MBL Foundation). How did you find out about the MBL Foundation?

a. Interviewee eleven:

Top management at Lane let us know immediately about the Lane Foundation. Mrs. Lane was going to do something, but nobody really knew what the Lane Foundation was going to do because it had not been spelled out. Then certain rumors passed and I heard about it when I was speaking to someone about going to school. I decided to just check into it. I made the extra step on my own. It was easier than the Trade Act. I was almost

tempted to stay on it because it was so easy. They remove all the hassle and handle everything. They talked with the counselors and the administration. All I had to do is talk to the Lane Foundation and show up for class.

b. Interviewee twelve:

We found out about the Lane Foundation after the announcement by a letter and rumors. The Trade Act would not pay for me to go to floral design school, so I went to the Lane Foundation. The Lane Foundation will pay for whatever you needed computers, books, tuition, gas, and whatever. I even heard they helped people pay their bills and take them to an employer and get them a job. They are awesome and need recognition for what they have done for this community.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I found out about it through rumors first and then a friend. I am receiving unemployment and funding from the Trade Act, but the VEC would not give me an expense check. The VEC says I drive too far, but people who drive to Lynchburg get it. The Lane Foundation picked that up for me and also paid for uniforms, shoes, and equipment. All I had to do is send them a memo or my receipts and they would pay me. I also told Steve my computer had died and I needed a new one. He handed me a certificate and said go get your new computer. I wish the VEC worked like that.

3) Explain why you would or would not recommend the VEC to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve their services?

a. Interviewee eleven:

Yes I would recommend them, but make a personal connection. I think they could improve their training sessions. I thought they were not conducive to the learning process. They're just pushing people through too quickly. That is what I mean about making a personal contact. I had a good relationship with the Trade Act coordinator. She was different and slowed it down. She put things on a personal level and you don't feel like a number.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I recommend the VEC because people need something when there is nothing else, but they could use a lot of improving. The VEC persuaded me to go in the Microcomputer Automation program for one year. I really wanted to go into some kind of social work, but they persuaded me not to. The VEC should consider that and not force people to take this or else. Also,

under the Trade Act a person cannot work and go to school at the same time. People's unemployment has run out before they finished school.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I say if you can do better than leave the VEC alone, but what can you do? I think a study of Lane would be good for the VEC to do. There excuse was it was too many of us to deal with. I would say, "It's not my problem, it's your job! Why don't you hire some of us temporarily that need a job and get this paperwork done"! My unemployment will run out before I finish school. Under the Trade Act I cannot work, so what I'm I suppose to do?

4) Explain why you would or would not recommend the MBL Foundation to other dislocated workers that need assistance. How can they improve their services?

a. Interviewee eleven:

Yes, I would recommend the Lane Foundation. No hassle or red tape. No improvements.

b. Interviewee twelve:

Some people may abuse them because of how laid back they are. I mean you just walk in and say you were laid off and they bend over backwards to help you. I do recommend them because of the flexibility.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

I really don't know how they can improve, but I do recommend them for any Lane person who wants to go back to school. They are great! I could see somebody trying to abuse them because of the computer deal. People will do anything today, but I think they do have a list of everybody that worked at Lane, so I do not think that would happen.

5) What types of services or benefits would you recommend to be offered to dislocated workers?

a. Interviewee eleven:

I thought someone should have intervened earlier. I think sometimes companies do not understand how it impacts people. They did train them on how to fill out applications, but at some point you need somebody there to be with you. I think that would have really helped. They would have felt that Lane cared instead of being just thrown out on their own.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I think the Trade Act is great, but personally if you're not able to take advantage of that I really don't think it's the government's fault. I do think more honesty from the company should have been displayed. I also believe they could give us an opportunity to compete with those foreigners for lower wages.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

They need to have their program in order and not wait until the last-minute. They need to say to the VEC, "We are shutting down. It's not public yet, but get ready for it." The VEC should hire people from Lane temporarily to help out. Nobody knows Lane or its people like the ones who worked there.

6) Would those services or benefits persuade you to participate in the VEC or MBL Foundation? Why?

a. Interviewee eleven:

I participated anyway, but I would have been more than happy to help the people at Lane if they would have announced the layoff early. I really think more people would have a better attitude towards Lane and the VEC.

b. Interviewee twelve:

I did participate, but I think these issues would influence other people to participate.

c. Interviewee thirteen:

Yes. I think by having actual Lane people helping out at the VEC would have been a lot better. I think people would have been more willing to participate more.

G. *Participation*: No data is collected for this category. Only the decision to participate is stated for each interviewee.

a. Interviewee eleven: Participated in both organizations.

b. Interviewee twelve: Participated in both organizations.

c. Interviewee thirteen: Participated in both organizations.

# Richard G. Burnett

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www.gregsworld.com

- Education**      1998-2003      **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA**
- Doctorate of Philosophy, Career and Technical Education
  - Master of Science, Education
  - Bachelor of Arts, Economics

**Specializations:**

- International Economics and Development
- Macroeconomics and Finance
- Training and Development/Adult Education

**Foreign Languages:**

- Persian/Farsi (Basic Proficiency)
- Russian (Basic Proficiency)
- Spanish (Basic Proficiency)
- Hebrew (Currently Pursuing)

- 1995-98      **Central Virginia Community College**
- Associate of Applied Science Degree in Marketing
  - Associate of Applied Science Degree in Management
  - Associate of Arts and Science Degree in Business Administration
  - Associate of Arts and Science Degree in Education
  - Associate of Arts and Science Degree in Science
  - Certificate of Business Supervision

- 1991-95      **United States Marine Corps**
- Marine Combat Training/School of Infantry
  - Motor Transport Operator School
  - Terrorism and Counteraction for Marines
  - Computer Programming Certificate

**Skills and Competencies**

**Access Control Systems:**

- Best Access Security Systems Integrated Solutions (B.A.S.I.S.): Integration of access control, ID card management, closed circuit television and alarm monitoring into a single software management package.

**Operating Systems:**

- Microsoft Windows
- Unix/Linux
- Macintosh

**Software:**

- **Statistics:** SAS, JMP, SPSS, MINITAB, STATA
- **E-Learning:** Blackboard Course Management Systems
- **Computing and Publishing:** MS Office and Visual Studio, Adobe Acrobat, Photoshop



**Professional Experience**

08/99-Present: **Virginia Tech College of Engineering, Computer Science Department,** Blacksburg, VA

**Consultant/Lab Manager/Access Control Specialist**

- Designed and manage Access Control Systems for twenty-one research and computing labs.
- Instituted a staff development program that ensured efficient employee training solutions.
- Hire, train, and manage student employees that provide administrative support and tutoring assistance to university students enrolled in computer science classes.
- Provide administrative support for MS Windows, UNIX, and Macintosh systems.

06/95-03/99: **Kroger Company,** Lynchburg, VA

**Grocery Clerk**

- Managed store in absence of the store manager.
- Responsible for customer relations and employee oversight and training.
- Processed inventory utilizing a satellite inventory tracking system.

06/91-06/95: **United States Marine Corps,** Camp Lejeune, NC

- Trained Marines to employ various small arms, automatic weapons, and explosives.
- Designed and conducted training programs to prepare Marines for leaders roles.
- Instructed Marines to tactically operate and maintain various military vehicles.
- Engaged in joint military operations with various foreign and American armed forces along the Mediterranean Coast of Europe, Asia, and Africa.
- Participated in "Operation Provide Promise" in the Adriatic Sea, a joint operation with the US Navy and Air Force involving both naval carrier aircraft and land-based air protected humanitarian relief efforts in the former Yugoslavia.
- Organized and directed a twenty-man unit responsible for securing the units command post during the Haitian Campaign "Operation Uphold Democracy."
- Received Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal serving with the Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Caribbean during "Operation Uphold Democracy."
- Trained in amphibious warfare; tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel; urban warfare tactics; desert and cold weather warfare and survival; and mountain warfare.

**Honors and Professional Activities**

**College:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| - Deans List, GPA 3.9   | - Association for Career and Technical Education, 2001-present |
| - Omicron Tau Theta Honor Society                             | - Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association 2002-present          |
| - Rufus M. Beamer Professional Development Award Winner, 2002 |  |

**Marines:**

- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| - Rifle Expert                     | - Good Conduct Medal                |
| - National Defense Medal           | - Letter of Appreciation            |
| - Sea Service Deployment Ribbon    | - Certificate of Commendation       |
| - Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal | - First Class Physical Fitness Test |