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Funeral Service Employers' Perceptions of Body Art and Hireability

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Funeral Service Employers' Perceptions of Body Art and Hireability

by

Tanya E. Scotece

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction
with an emphasis in Adult Education
Department of Leadership, Counseling, Adult, Career, and Higher Education
College of Education
University of South Florida

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my daughter, Shayna K. Forgetta, the light of my life, my rock and inspiration for continuing my education, as well as my constant support throughout the process.

Secondly, to my dear friend PJM, who encouraged me to pursue my education. Without her gentle spirit and guidance, my achievement of this degree would not have been possible.

Finally, to all those in funeral service profession.

I hope this work will be beneficial to those who are inspired to be part of a profession that very few undertake.

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to determine whether there were biases among funeral home and cemetery professionals with regards to hiring mortuary science graduates with tattoos.

An anonymous survey including a photograph of either a male or female with various degrees of visible body art, ranging from none to extreme, was sent to 1484 members of the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association. The primary methodology used to determine whether biases existed regarding visible body art were a semantic differential and a hireability scale. The survey was designed to gather information related to the following three research questions:

1. What are employers' perceptions regarding hireability of individuals based on extent of visible body art?
2. Are there differences in the employers' perceptions regarding visible body art based on the gender of the individuals in the photographs?
3. What are the differences in perceptions regarding visible body art based on respondent age, gender, and their own extent of visible body art?

Of the surveys distributed, responses totaled 151. Due to incomplete information, 74 were discarded. The number of surveys used in the analysis was 77.

Results indicated no specific biases of employers' perception towards potential hirees with body art. These results were based on multiple categories, including age

and gender of respondent, extent of body art of respondent, and respondent position within their companies.

Although the responses were neutral and showed no significant bias towards hirees with body art, mortuary science students should be aware of potential biases of the families served by the funeral homes, including age of the deceased and family members, as well as the conservative nature of the funeral profession.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Funeral rites date back to Neanderthal times. Researchers have discovered Neanderthal burial grounds containing skeletons with animal antlers on the body and flower fragments beside the corpse, indicating some sort of burial ritual, as early as 60,000 BC (thefuneralsource.com). “Undertaking as a clear-cut, distinct secular occupation had not appeared in Europe before the 17th century” (Haberstein & Lamers, 2001, p. 102). There are two distinct aspects of funeral service. One is funeral directing and the other is embalming. Most states in the U.S. have a combination license, Licensed Funeral Director/Embalmer. The words undertaker, mortician, funeral director, and embalmer have all been used to describe someone actively working with the deceased in the funeral profession. However, licensing in the United States currently refers to the Licensed Funeral Director/Embalmer. Embalming began in the United States during the Civil War, when bodies of deceased soldiers needed preservation for the trip home (funeralwise.com, 2011).

Originally the trappings of a feudal funeral—yards upon yards of black drapery for the chief rooms and the staircase, an elaborate black mourning bed, funeral carriages, a velvet pall, a hearse with panel upon which the deceased person’s arms [coat of arms] are displayed, mourning clothes and mourning gifts—enough somber materials to change the usual hearty feudal home atmosphere to one of the blackest gloom, were family owned. (Haberstein & Lamers, 2001, p. 103)

As mentioned above, the atmosphere was somber. To adhere to the somber theme, funeral directors have traditionally worn black, conservative clothing.

Until the late 1960s, funeral homes and cemeteries were small, family-owned businesses where funeral parlors were passed down from one generation to another. A consolidation of the industry began in the late 1960s, when large companies began acquiring family funeral businesses. In spite of this shift, the funeral industry still consists primarily of small, independent, family-owned businesses.

To date, there are 56 accredited mortuary science programs in the United States. Three distinct types of individuals are currently entering into mortuary science programs: (a) those who are seeking to take over the family business and are in need of licensing to meet state requirements for owning funeral homes; (b) individuals seeking second careers, many of whom have come out of healthcare fields and are now pursuing mortuary science as a second career; and (c) Goth-like individuals with visible signs and evidence of body art in the form of tattoos and reflective symbols and body piercing in the form of eyebrow piercing, nose piercing, tongue piercing, and lip piercing.

Students completing mortuary science programs are having difficulty securing employment (A. Guerra, Owner/Funeral Director, personal communication, October 17, 2012). These students, most with visible body art already, are entering into these programs and are unaware that they may fail in securing employment in the funeral profession due to their obvious body art. This study was undertaken to determine whether there was discrimination based on visible body art. The study examined whether potential students should be educated about the employers' viewpoint pertaining to body art.

The funeral profession for centuries has been extremely conservative. Typically, the long black coats worn by middle-aged men were very stereotypical in the funeral profession. Haberstein and Lamas (2001) state:

Undertakers preferred to have the drivers of their hearses and carriages dressed in livery. In keeping with the somber-toned tradition, throughout most of the century the dress followed the gloomy motif: well-dressed liverymen were garbed in black broadcloth or doe skin coats, pantaloons and vest. The coat and vest were single-breasted and buttoned up completely to the neck. With these garments they wore a white linen garrotte shirt collar and black silk tie, black kid gloves and black top hat. (Haberstein & Lamas, 2001, p. 268)

According to Haberstein and Lamas, the formal trade of undertaking developed in England at the close of the 19th century for three reasons. First, the church was unable to supervise all aspects of the burial of the dead; second, new preservation techniques were being developed; and third, the social order was changing, and “decent funerals” were becoming the order of the day, with “ceremonies of disposal directed by a person who could not only take charge of other funeral tasks but with skills beyond the competence of the average person organize and direct the funeral” (Haberstein& Lamas, 2001, p. 115).

Out of respect for the dead, the mood was one of solemnity and gloom, and mourners attending the ceremony wore their darkest or most subdued clothing. “Not only was the undertaker’s garb of the traditional black, but so generally was the garb of all those who figured importantly in the funeral, minister, pallbearers, drivers and other functionaries, as well as the bereaved” (Haberstein& Lamas, 2001, p. 268).

During the Victorian era and into the 20th century, women were not allowed to be in business, so they were not part of the funeral profession (Rotondaro, 2011). This attitude has since changed. To date, mortuary science programs are being populated

by both young (under the age of 25) males and females, with one third of them displaying visible signs of body art. Traditionally, there are only two types of funeral homes—those owned and operated by family, and those run by large corporations (i.e., Carriage House, Stewart Enterprises, and Service Corporation International).

Statement of the Problem

Mortuary science students are completing their program, passing national board exams, and investing time and money in their schooling. Limited research was available to identify the effects appearance has on the hiring of mortuary science graduates in the funeral profession. However, in today's world, tattoos and body piercings have become more mainstream. Corporate dress codes have reflected this change by either maintaining no guidelines at all or by establishing rigid policies regarding dress.

The corporate policy at American Apparel

forbids shiny lip-gloss, bangs, and notes that “blow-drying hair excessively could cause heat damage.” Similarly, financial bank UBS dictates women “may wear no more than seven jewels” and “scarves are compulsory, and must be tied with ‘authorized knots.’” (Faw, 2011, p. 1)

Regarding tattoos and piercings:

For the past few decades, it's likely that coffeehouse baristas and graphic designers would be adorned with tattoos or piercings, but now, it's just as likely that the kindergarten teacher, bank manager, or real estate agent is sporting ink or a nose ring. Nearly half of 26-40-year-olds (40%) and 36% of 18-25-year-olds have tattoos, and 22% of 26-40-year-olds and 30% of 18-25-year-olds have at least one body piercing, according to the Pew Research Center. (Faw, 2011, p. 1)

Corporate policy at Walt Disney parks cites:

At Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, we've become famous for our friendly, classic appearance. This look is not a coincidence, but a result of our cast members' support of the Appearance Standards, or as we call it, the Disney Look.

The Disney Look is a classic look that is clean, natural, polished, and professional, and avoids "cutting edge" trends or extreme styles

The Disney Look includes, but is not limited to, the following requirements:

Male and Female

Body Alteration

Intentional body alteration or modification for the purpose of achieving a visible physical effect that disfigures, deforms or similarly detracts from a professional image is prohibited. Examples include, but are not limited to: visible tattoos, brands, body piercing (other than traditional ear piercing for women), tongue piercing or splitting, tooth filing, earlobe expansion and disfiguring skin implants. Tattoos must be discreetly and completely covered at all times. Jewelry, spacers, retainers, or plugs are not permitted in any body piercing, including non-visible piercings, while working. (cp.disneycareers.com)

Other companies have similar restrictions, which serves to highlight potential conflict with personal desires for body art and company policies prohibiting it.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of employers regarding the appearance of females and males with body art based on photographs and whether positive or negative perceptions are related to employers by the extent of personal tattoos in order to provide mortuary science students and others interested in entering the conservative funeral profession effective guidance regarding visible body art. This study explored and identified the perceptions of funeral service employees with hiring abilities regarding individuals with visible body art. Additional study relates to whether bias exists by the gender of the potential hire plus the gender of the person doing the hiring, his or her age, and extent of the person's own visible body art.

Research Questions

The study gathered information related to the following research questions:

1. What are employers' perceptions regarding hireability of individuals based on extent of visible body art?

2. Are there differences in the employers' perceptions regarding visible body art based on the gender of the individuals in the photographs?

3. What are the differences in perceptions regarding visible body art based on respondents' age, gender, and their own extent of visible body art?

Significance of the Study

Because of the conservative nature of the funeral profession, applicants with tattoos, visible body art, or piercings may find it difficult to obtain funeral home employment. The funeral home director's first consideration is the family of the deceased. Funeral home employees must always be conscious of the family's feelings and present a picture of professionalism and competence at all times when dealing with family members.

Although the mortuary science field is extremely conservative, supporting documentation about workplace dress guidelines for the funeral profession itself is not readily available. Little research existed regarding the effects of visible body art and the securing of employment in the funeral profession (A. Guerra, Owner/Funeral Director, personal communication, October 17, 2012). Therefore, it may be important to the field to identify whether biases do exist in the hiring of individuals with visible body art.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study combined semantic differential and hireability scales to analyze employers' perceptions of potential hirees. These scales were designed to measure whether potential employers had a bias towards hiring people with body art. Semantic differential scales can be used to measure opinions, attitudes, and values on a psychometrically controlled scale. A Semantic Differential Scale, a rating scale invented by Osgood (Osgood & Suci, 1957) was used for this study.

Charles Osgood and his associates developed this measurement technique while working on a theory of meaning. These connotations are used to determine attitudes towards particular objects, events, or concepts. Their scale consists of the presentation of some concept . . . followed by a series of scale items, perhaps a half dozen or as many as 20, each bound by bipolar adjectives, and each used to evaluate the same concept. (Levine & Parkinson, 2014, p. 373)

Definition of Terms

The following terminology is used throughout this study. To avoid any misinterpretation of their meanings for purposes exclusively to this study, the definitions are presented here:

Appearance: The physical external aspect of an individual's body that is seen by others.

Employers: Individuals responsible for hiring.

Extent of visible body art: Visible tattoos based on number and size.

Funeral Director: An individual completing the educational requirements of the American Board of Funeral Service Educators (ABFSE), passing the National Board

exam, and meeting the individual state requirements to hold a license as a funeral director, who is responsible for the appropriate handling of the deceased.

Funeral Director/Owner: An individual holding a license and the owner of a funeral home or mortuary.

Funeral Profession: The industry caring for the deceased at the time of the person's death to the body's final disposition—*anatomical donation, burial, or cremation* (International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association[ICCFA] website).

Funeral Service: The individuals employed by funeral homes/mortuaries to provide assistance in caring for the body of the deceased.

Hireability: The potential to be hired at a particular place of employment. In this study, hireability was measured by an 18-question hireability scale.

Mortuary Science: The study and practice of providing care and preparation for burial or transportation of a deceased human body, including the preservation and sanitation of the body (ABFSE Programs, 2013, p. 1).

Mortuary Science Graduate: An individual who has completed the minimal degree requirements (Associate Degree in Mortuary Science) to be able to sit for the National Board Exam administered by the Academy of Professional Service and Examining Boards in the United States.

Perceptions: Employers' subjective viewpoints regarding visible body art.

Semantic Differential: A scale consisting of pairs of extreme opposite adjectives separated by seven spaced numbers from seven on the left to one on the right. It is utilized in this study to measure the perceptions of potential funeral profession

employees. The Semantic Differential Scale was invented by Osgood to measure the connotative meaning of objects, events, and concepts(Osgood &Suci, 1957).

Visible Body Art. The physical altering of a person's skin including, but not limited to, puncturing or piercing the skin, tattooing or altering of color with letters, designs, or a combination of both.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 presents an introduction to the study. It includes the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, conceptual framework, definitions of terms used in this study, and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 is a review of the literature related to this research study. It incorporates information related to the history of the funeral profession regarding attire and dress code, tattoos and visible body art, contemporary views of visible body art in the workplace, employers' perceptions specifically regarding mortuary science graduates, semantic differential scale, and summary.

Chapter 3 illustrates the methods used for this study. It incorporates the procedures utilized in this study, including the research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, hireability measures and summary.

Chapter 4 introduces the study's findings. It examines the demographic profile of the survey respondents by photographs received, survey results, and observations.

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the research project. It incorporates the summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of employers regarding the appearance of females and males with body art based on photographs and whether positive or negative perceptions are related to employers by the extent of personal tattoos. The parts of this chapter include the history of the funeral profession regarding attire and dress code, tattoos and visible body art, contemporary views of visible body art in the workplace, and employers' perceptions specifically regarding mortuary science graduates and semantic differential.

History of the Funeral Profession Regarding Attire and Dress Code

Historical study of the business of funeral directing is not extensive. The topic of death may spark the interest of historians, but the day-to-day affairs of the funeral business are hardly a topic of great concern to anyone unless, of course, the need for services arises.

The funeral business arose out of the necessity and desire to bury the dead.

According to Burrell (1998) in *Origins of Undertaking*,

Because undertaking involved a gradual expansion of various death-related tasks, the timing of the occupation's origins cannot be precisely ascertained. It began not when folks started doing undertaking tasks, but rather, when they came to be called "undertakers"—or to call themselves such. (Burrell, 1998, p. 4)

Most resources suggest that undertaking arose out of family and friends' personal service to a deceased loved one. However, many different occupations lend themselves to undertaking. "Carpenters, cabinetmakers, liverymen (hack drivers), and sextons were all capable of reorienting their businesses to deal exclusively with funerary arrangements" (Burrell, 1998, p. 5).

Another forerunner to the undertaker in America was the *aanspreecker* of colonial New York: "attired in gloomy black, with hat fluttering long streamers of crape," he served not only as funeral inviter, but usually also as gravedigger, bell ringer, and chorister. His was a public office, with legislated fees and a requirement to give free services to the poor. (Burrell, 1998, p. 13)

Although undertaking existed in eighteenth-century United States, women were, for the most part, excluded from undertaking tasks. They, instead, acted as caregivers to the dead:

collecting the deceased, washing it, rubbing it with herbs to reduce the smell, dressing it and positing it for its wake and burial. It was through this act that they earned themselves the title of shrouding women, or as time passed, the layers-out of the dead. (Gillies, 2011, p. 1)

This became an occupational group in the early 1800s. These "layers-out of the dead," the women who washed and dressed dead bodies, had their services listed in early-nineteenth-century city directories (Burrell, 1998, p. 10).

Due in part of 19th century Victorian notions of decorum being strict, women were the only ones allowed to handle the remains of other women and children, as it was considered inappropriate for a man to embalm an unclothed woman he didn't know. (Gillies, 2011, p. 1)

At that time, however, funeral industry trade journals still discouraged female interest. Journals such as *The Casket* and *Embalmer's Monthly* even went to the extreme of publishing editorials indicating that women were unfit for the funeral profession in order to discourage women's entering the field. They claimed in editorials

that women were “unfit to deal with death and the physical demands requested for funerary practices, and . . . contended that women don’t do science, concerting the new cornerstone niche of the science of embalming” (Gillies, 2011, p. 1).

A Spanish-born nurse named Odou, a former Red Cross nurse who became nurse to several royal families, is said to have sparked the interest of women in the profession of embalming. Because of her extensive writings on the subject, women began enrolling “for training to become licensed and practicing embalmers. As Superintendent of the Women’s Department at her own mortuary, Odou organized the Women’s Licensed Embalmer Association to furnish female embalmers to families and undertakers” (Gillies, 2011, p. 2).

There were some setbacks to women in the American funeral industry in the 1950’s as women were generally regarded as ‘second-class citizens’ in the business world and were restricted to jobs such as homemaker, nurse or teacher, unless of course the woman was raised in a family-owned funeral home. Like all industries, the feminist movement in the 1970’s and 1980’s had an impact on the American funeral industry, providing opportunities as women campaigned against cultural and political inequities, breaking the “glass ceiling” that held back previous generations. (Phaneuf, 2010, p. 1)

Research indicates that many employers do not have a personal problem with body art but may be more concerned with customers' discernment and employees' perspicacity. “Stereotypes associated with piercings and tattoos can affect others' perception of people with body art” (Society for Human Resource Management, 2006, p. 2). Having tattoos and body piercings might hurt those who are trying to find a job, but that all depends on where the tattooed person seeks employment. “An operations manager at a Borders Books and Café says about hiring tattooed employees, ‘We look for it. It makes things more interesting and more fun’” (Kang & Jones, 2007, p. 42).

In a 2011 *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* article, Hoyt addressed the topic of workplace prejudice. Hoyt conducted a study on gender roles using a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). In the study, participants indicated the perceived hireability of a candidate on an 8-item measure. The responses were averaged, with higher scores being an indication of better potential as a future employee. In the article, Hoyt discussed prejudice in hiring.

Prejudice is viewed as emerging in particular social contexts, when stereotypic beliefs about members of a particular social group are viewed as being incongruent with a social role. Thus, workplace-related gender bias stems from the mismatch between gender stereotypes and the characteristics deemed crucial for success in the workplace. . . . These gender biases play a particularly detrimental role in employment related decision-making processes in part because the generally unstructured nature of those decisions allows for biased decisions without accountability. (Hoyt, 2012, p. 86)

Because criteria for hiring are vague, discrimination in hiring often exists. Hoyt continues:

The present work also seeks to extend the role incongruity principle of prejudice by incorporating the role of the perceiver in these processes. Although the degree of inconsistency can vary as a function of the stereotypes, the role requirements, and the activation of those beliefs, it can also vary as a function of the perceiver. That is, certain individuals may be more or less inclined to validate and try to uphold the alignment between these beliefs. In particular, people who believe in and support the status quo are more likely to be motivated to defend the status quo than those who advocate for social change. (Hoyt, p. 87)

Hoyt further discusses conservative vs. liberal viewpoints:

Ample evidence shows that conservatives are more likely to support tradition, order, and the status quo in comparison to liberals who are more likely to support social change. . . . Moreover, conservatives are more likely than liberals to endorse and defend system-justifying ideologies and policy attitudes that serve to justify and bolster the existing social order and maintain that the current social arrangements are fair and desirable. (Hoyt, p. 87)

Kang and Jones (2007) discuss the variety of reasons people choose to get tattoos. Most tattooed people are young and liberal and see their tattoos as unique aspects of themselves. As Kang and Jones (2007) describe:

While no single explanation accounts for the increasing popularity of tattoos, researchers find that people use tattoos to express who they are, what they have lived through, and how they see themselves in relation to others and to their social worlds At a stage when young people are seeking to assert their independence, tattoos may provide a way to ground a sense of self in a seemingly changing and insecure world. (p. 42)

Faw (2011) notes in an article for *Forbes*:

For the past few decades, it's likely that coffeehouse baristas and graphic designers would be adorned with tattoos or piercings, but now, it's just as likely that the kindergarten teacher, bank manager, or real estate agent is sporting ink or a nose ring. (Faw, 2011, p. 2)

Although social norms are slowly shifting, Kang and Jones (2007) indicate that visible tattoos still present an obstacle in some cases. In spite of the increasing popularity of tattoos, they still carry stigma and can provoke discrimination in some cases. "The University of California at Los Angeles conducted a 'Business Attire Survey' in 1999 which revealed that 90 percent of campus recruiters looked negatively on tattoos" (Kang & Jones, 2007, p. 46).

In an article, Casey, who had a temporary tattoo imprinted on his face to measure people's reaction, discussed his experience:

When you have a face tattoo, people will give you two kinds of stares: the long stare or the short stare. The short stare is when they give a quick glance and then their eyes go straight to the ground, on the inside you can tell they're going, "Don't look, don't look, don't look!" The long stare is when someone's whole body stops, their eyes get confused and angry, and you get the feeling they want to yell at you, punch you in the face, or call your mother to tell her that she should have had an abortion. Either way, both stares made me feel both socially superior and completely uncomfortable.

I ran into people I knew all day. Their criticisms of my new life choice ranged from, “You ruined your pretty face,” to, “You ruined your life.” Strangers stared at me everywhere I went. The attention became so annoying that I couldn’t take their staring anymore and I went home and locked myself away in my bedroom like an angry goth teen. (Casey, 2012, p. 2)

The location of the tattoo does make a difference. Those with tattoos on their necks can easily cover them up. Kang and Jones assert: “Hardcore forms of tattooing—such as full-body and facial tattoos—result in stronger stigmatization that can affect employability and social acceptability in ways that a small, easily hidden tattoo would not” (Kang & Jones, 2007, p. 46).

Young people may find it necessary to cover their tattoos not only when looking for work but also on the job. Once employed, many people still need to keep their tattoos covered or face situations like that of a receptionist in San Diego interviewed by Mifflin: “People think I’m stupid until they talk to me. They think because you look different you have no respect for society and that you’re not educated.” (Kang & Jones, 2007, p. 46)

A study was conducted by Hawkes, Senn, and Thorn (2004) examining undergraduate students’ attitudes toward women with tattoos. My research is a continuation of this study to further investigate the perceptions of employers of people who hire people with tattoos. The Hawkes, Senn, and Thorn study indicated that both men and women

had more negative attitudes toward a woman with a visible tattoo than toward the other women in the descriptions. The size of the tattoo was a predictor of evaluation only for men and women who did not have tattoos themselves. Finally, participants with more conservative gender attitudes evaluated all women more negatively, beyond the effects already accounted for by gender differences. (Hawkes, Senn & Thorn, 2004)

Cognizant of the stigma facial tattoos often present, Hudson (2003) cautions:

If you’re looking to get a tattoo on your foot or hand, and especially your face, you’re probably going to have a difficult time finding an artist to do it. Many studios have policies against doing tattoos in these areas Some artists feel

strongly enough about it to turn down potential business by refusing to do this type of tattoo. (Hudson, 2003, p. 1)

Many tattoo artists feel people have often not given enough thought to the consequences of facial art and, therefore, turn people away, giving them time to reflect about their decision.

Many tattoo artists bear the burden of becoming the conscience of naive and impetuous customers wanting tattoos that could potentially cause them a lot of problems down the road. They know that highly visible tattoos like hand and facial decorations can cause the wearer to become the subject of ridicule or impede their chances of finding employment Tattoo artists know the true weight of wearing permanent art and want their clients to be happy with the choices they make. So sometimes it becomes the duty of the artist to draw a line over which they will not cross in order to protect you, the customer. (Hudson, 2003, p. 1)

Although the presence of tattooed workers is prevalent, there is no consensus among employers on strategies for addressing them in the workplace. According to Ponte and Gillen (2007) in an a *Duke Journal* article,

In seeking to maintain control over employee appearance, employers have adopted formal and informal "body art work rules" in workplace dress and grooming codes that restrict or prohibit body modification. Typically, courts have given employers great latitude in adopting dress and grooming codes, elevating the regulation of employee appearance to a fundamental part of the employer's prerogatives or discretion in operating the business. In an effort to avoid legal challenges, employers typically claim neutral reasons, such as maintaining a professional image, for their dress and grooming codes. (Ponte & Gillen, 2007, p. 2)

This policy is not well received by employees who feel tattoos have nothing to do with their work performance.

Employees often chafe at these restrictions, which appear to have almost no meaningful connection to the successful performance of their jobs, with some bringing discrimination claims under federal and state laws. Unlawful discrimination actions over body art work rules are the newest round in the battle over dress and grooming codes, following in the footsteps of more traditional

legal actions based on gender attire, hair and beard lengths, and religious garb. (Ponte & Gillen, 2007, p. 2)

Armstrong (1991) conducted a study of career-oriented women with tattoos, asking them questions regarding their experiences and decisions regarding the procedure and people's reactions to it.

She found that many people with whom the women came into contact made derogatory and stereotypical remarks, such as calling them "biker mama" (p. 219). Armstrong concluded that women received ambivalent responses from many of the people in their lives . . . and the most negative attitudes . . . came from their fathers or fathers of their friends and associates. These men responded . . . with silence or disparaging remarks, and they often verbalized their worries about how society in general could perceive the tattoo and the woman who wore it. (Armstrong, 1991, 219)

Faw (2011) indicated that most HR [Human Resource] managers "concede that all things being equal, they will hire the more clean-cut employee" (p. 2).

Because of the conservative nature of the funeral profession, applicants with tattoos, visible body art, or piercings may find it difficult to obtain funeral home employment. The funeral home director's first consideration is the family of the deceased. Funeral home employees must always be conscious of the family's feelings and present a picture of professionalism and competence at all times when dealing with family members. This policy is clearly defined for students entering Mortuary Science programs, as illustrated in the Amarillo College Mortuary Science Program Dress Code:

The funeral service industry is an extremely conservative one. While enrolled in the **Amarillo College Mortuary Science program**, students will adhere to a strict dress code.

1. Nails will be short, clean and without vivid polish (black, blue, green, etc.)
2. Cosmetics, when used, will be natural colors, applied moderately.
3. Perfumes and colognes are discouraged.
4. No visible tattoos.
5. Rings are limited: one finger per hand, two rings per finger.

6. No anklets, bracelets, or necklaces are worn in the preparation room. Medical identification jewelry is the only exception.
7. Men are not to wear any jewelry in any visible body piercing.
8. Women will restrict visible body piercing to ears only, one item per ear. Length of the item will not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ the length of the ear.
9. Tongue piercings are considered visible and unacceptable.
10. Skirt lengths will not be higher than mid-patella.
11. Preparation room shoes will be used when appropriate.
 - a. Used only in the preparation room
 - b. Impervious to liquids and body fluids
 - c. Skid-proof soles, not heels, well-padded for comfort

Please remember: If you have to ask, it is probably not appropriate for the funeral home. Individual facility rules and regulations regarding clothing and/or grooming supersede the information contained in this document. You are a representative for and a reflection of the Mortuary Science Program. (Amarillo College, n.d., p. 15)

Although the mortuary science field is extremely conservative, supporting documentation about workplace dress guidelines for the funeral profession is not readily available. Little research exists regarding the effects of visible body art and the securing of employment in the funeral profession (A. Guerra, Owner/Funeral Director, personal communication, October 17, 2012).

Tattoos and Visible Body Art

According to Rademackers and Schoenthal (1992), Inserting dye of pigments under the skin and creating representational design has been practiced by many cultures around the world for thousands of years. Tattooing had a long history even prior to the discovery of a tattooed man embedded in ice, a find that suggested the practice occurred circa 3300 Before Common Era (BCE) (Rademackers & Schoenthal, 1992). Prior to that discovery, it was thought that tattooing was primarily an ancient Egyptian practice dating from circa 2000 BCE (Manual & Sheehan, 2007). Mummies dating from 4,000 to 2,000 BCE have shown evidence of tattoo markings. Tattooing

was brought to the New World in 1769 by sailors returning from voyages to the South Pacific (Sanders, 1988). Although the association with sailors has never completely dissipated (Sanders, 1988), the practice of tattooing became more widespread and occasionally socially acceptable in the Western world after that time (Sanders, 1988). Tattooing enjoyed a brief period of popularity in the late 19th Century in England and in the United States in the 1920s (Sanders, 1988). It later was relegated to the socially marginalized population (Armstrong, 1991; Fox, 1976; Post, 1968; Sanders, 1988).

Piercing has almost as long a history as tattooing, having been practiced by Egyptian pharaohs, Mayans, and Roman centurions (Armstrong, 1996). Body piercing is sometimes studied along with tattooing, partly because people with tattoos often have piercings (Buhrich, 1983; Frederick & Bradley, 2000). Piercing, particularly in adolescents, is usually carried out in tattoo parlors (Armstrong, 1996) or is self-inflicted (Martin, 1997). According to Sanders (1988), ear piercing has become a mainstream practice for women, but piercing eyebrows, nose, cheeks, or other areas appears to symbolize one's disaffection from society, much like tattooing (Sanders, 1988). According to Buhrich (1983), body piercing other than the earlobe has been associated with the gay subculture. Researchers in one study found that the younger that individuals begin piercing, the more likely they are to exhibit antisocial tendencies (Buhrich, 1983). However, piercing is generally regarded as less extreme than tattooing because removing the body jewelry will ordinarily cause the pierced hole to heal (Armstrong, 1996). This may explain why this practice of body alteration has been only briefly mentioned in the literature and rarely studied in its own right.

Tattoos have been empirically associated with several deviant behaviors and criminality (Manual & Sheehan, 2007). However, it should be indicated that these results are based on correlational studies, many of which are old, with results that cannot be used to make causal inferences. Research on tattoos has documented a strong relationship between people with tattoos and antisocial personalities or actual criminal conduct (Manual & Sheehan, 2007). For example, studies have documented that more heavily tattooed Naval detainees were more likely to have a previous naval or civilian offense. Manual & Sheehan also cited that among delinquent girls incarcerated in juvenile facilities, the more heavily tattooed females were more aggressive, uncooperative, and unstable in addition to being more criminal in their attitude and behavior and that female prison inmates with tattoos were more likely to have been in all four types of institutions—juvenile halls, reformatories, jails, and prisons (Manual & Sheehan, 2007).

Contemporary Views of Visible Body Art in the Workplace

Tattoos, body piercings, and other visible body art are often perceived negatively, and this can hurt individuals' chances of obtaining employment. An unidentified respondent to a 2007 Tattoo and Body Piercing Survey conducted by Vault, Inc., stated, "Regardless of who the real person may be, stereotypes associated with piercings and tattoos can and do affect others. In general, individuals with tattoos and body piercings are often viewed as 'rougher' or 'less educated'" (Vault, 2007, p. 2). Most other respondents to the survey commented that displaying body art is a personal choice that can hinder a person's job finding prospects. One unidentified person even admitted to removing a nose ring in order to improve employment prospects (Gurchiek, 2007).

Discussion with employers addresses concerns from employees who must adhere to an individual company's dress code with regard to tattoos and piercings should they wish to continue their employment. Feldstein (2001) pointed out that the law sides with employers and protects them but addresses the lawsuits that are becoming more prevalent with the rise of tattoos and visible body art in the workplace. As long as employers do not discriminate based on age, sex, gender, race/ethnicity, and religion, the law works in their favor and allows them to impose dress codes and appearance policies. Companies with dress code policies cited in Feldstein's (2001) article include Wal-Mart, Sears, Ameritech Corp, and Starbucks (Feldstein, 2001).

In a more recent article, Timming (2015) examined prejudices surrounding visible body art and new challenges presented to hiring managers in the service sector as well as to the visibly tattooed, both of whom were interviewed for the research. Underlying these prejudices are negative associations documented in literature regarding tattoos, such as promiscuity; carrying weapons; reduced mental health; anger problems; substance abuse; hepatitis C; and decreased honesty, generosity and intelligence (Timming, 2015).

The data suggest that there are three ways of thinking about hiring managers' perceptions towards visible tattoos:

1. their personal views about tattoos;
2. their views (right or wrong) about what customers expect; and
3. whether a combination of their personal views and their assumptions about customers' expectations have a deleterious impact on the employment chances of a visibly tattooed job candidate. (Timming, 2015, p. 67)

One hiring manager who recruited higher education non-academic staff illustrated a personal prejudice against visibly tattooed people:

My daughter went out with a chap on a date with facial tattoos She's at medical school. She trained to be a doctor. And, you know, I have fantasized

about surgeons, you know, *even a dentist* would have done. But this chap, he was actually a tattoo artist himself and he had facial tattoos. He did not figure in my list of ideal boyfriend material. Fortunately, it didn't last. (Timming, 2015, p. 67)

Three tattooed hiring managers in Timming's study also attributed negative behaviors onto candidates with visible tattoos. One, a manager of a three-star hotel, "described the visibly tattooed as typically unemployed and a 'lower class of person,'" even though this hotel manager expressed outward pride in his own concealed tattoos. Non-tattooed hiring managers were even more critical, "the owner-manager of a liquor store, claiming to 'personally hate tattoos' and describing them as 'fairly horrific.'" Another recruiter "at a high-end luxury retail shop captured the essence of the hiring managers' attitudes toward visible tattoos by describing them . . . as 'a stigma.'" All these hiring managers were aware that their attitudes towards tattoos were based on prejudice. A manager of a landscaping business admitted, "I immediately make . . . a judgment, or a thought process, on the personality of that person based on the tattoos that I see." This hiring manager went on to say that tattoos "make a person look dirty." (Timming, 2015, p. 68)

What mattered most to the hiring managers interviewed in the study (Timming, 2015) was the way their customers perceived employees with visible body art. Several of those interviewed expressed concern that customers would view visibly tattooed employees as "abhorrent . . . repugnant . . . unsavory . . . and untidy." (Timming, 2015, p. 68)

All of this leads to point 3), on the extent to which visible tattoos can be said to reduce a job applicant's chances of gaining employment. The evidence in this regard was solid. The majority of hiring managers admitted that a visible tattoo would preclude a candidate from getting a job. [One hiring manager] stated

explicitly, "We're not going to employ someone with [non-concealable] tattoos . . . it's not what we're offering as a hotel." (Timming, 2015, p. 68)

Also interviewed in Timming's (2015) study were visibly tattooed people who reported being the subjects of prejudice.

All of the visibly tattooed respondents recognized that tattoos are often perceived by the wider society in a negative light. Rebecca, whose tattoos covered her hands, face and neck, articulated matter-of-factly that society "judges people that have tattoos and they think quite derogatorily about people who have tattoos." Some of the visibly tattooed respondents, specifically those with more discreet tattoos, even held negative perceptions of those with more conspicuous tattoos. For example, Sarah, whose ink is situated on the side of her hand just below her little finger, explained, "If you've got a tattoo on your neck, it makes you look like a criminal." (Timming, 2015, p. 69)

Although the visibly tattooed respondents recognized that there was a stigma associated with tattoos, many were visibly defiant. One respondent stated, "I don't have any regrets . . . I don't care what people think about my tattoos, to be honest, because they've all got meaning." Only one tattooed respondent expressed regret about his tattoos: "I've had the tattoos on my face for 30 years now, and it's about time I want rid of them now. It affects my life far too much and it's bringing on mental health problems . . . It stopped me from getting access to jobs." (Timming, 2015, pp. 69-70)

On the other hand, tattoos and piercings have now more prevalent and more widely accepted. According to a 2006 Pew Research Center survey, "54% of Gen Y'ers have a tattoo, dyed hair that is a non-traditional color, or a body piercing other than on their ear lobe" and Millennials are forcing changes in traditional workplace dress and grooming codes. (Pew Research Center, 2007)

V. DiSanzo, a graphic designer who is heavily tattooed, discussed his views on visible body art in the workplace.

I think that if you are not going to consider employment before you get tattooed, you are not thinking it through. Again, a lot of people get tattoos now, so it runs the spectrum about types. Chances are they are not going to get too far in any career if they make rash decisions to begin with. Personally, there are certain things . . . people who have some kind of sensibility, people who have good sense are more likely to subscribe to not going below the “Poverty Line,” which means don’t have a tattoo on your hands or your neck, basically anywhere that can be seen when wearing a long sleeved shirt . . . (V. DiSanzo, personal communication, April 1, 2013)

Employers’ Perceptions Specifically Regarding Mortuary Science Graduates

For many generations, the funeral profession has been primarily a family business in which funeral parlors are passed down from one generation to another, and funeral directors’ most crucial responsibility is to the families they serve. Since the turn of the century, there has been a shift in non-familial students entering into mortuary science programs nationwide. The issue of visible body art has opened up many questions in the human resources area of businesses, and funeral homes are not exempt.

According to the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE, 2013), currently there are 56 accredited mortuary science programs in U.S. colleges. “To achieve accreditation by ABFSE, programs must meet the standards approved by the Committee of Accreditation of ABFSE. Accredited programs are reviewed at least every seven years to assure that the standards are being met” (ABFSE Programs, p. 1).

Although there is some overlap, three distinct types of individuals enter mortuary science programs: a) those who wish to take over the family business and are in need of licensing to meet state requirements for owning their own funeral home; b) individuals in search of second careers; and c) Goth-like individuals with dyed black hair, dark fashions, and visible signs and evidence of body art in the form of tattoos and reflective

symbols and body piercing in the form of eyebrow piercing, nose piercing, and tongue and lip piercing.

Traditionally, there are two types of funeral home ownerships in the United States, those that are family operated and those that are run by large corporations (i.e., Carriage House, Stewart Enterprises, and Service Corporation International). For centuries, the funeral profession has been recognized as extremely conservative, with the long black coats worn by middle-aged men being very stereotypical dress. Women, particularly young women, were not seen as funeral directors. More recently, mortuary science programs are being populated by young (under the age of 25) males and females, with one third of them displaying visible signs of body art. Upon completion of their mortuary science programs, these individuals may not be able to secure employment in family-owned firms or within corporate firms.

Limited research has been conducted to specifically address the funeral service profession and the employment of mortuary science graduates with visible signs of body art.

In her article "Confessions of a Mortician," Mosca (2011) states:

What kind of person is attracted to working with the dead? Well, for the most part, it's not the grim popular caricature seen in movies, nor a job usually worked by Goth types. (Mosca, p. 1)

Once you are hired, you'll soon learn that conformity is key. The dress code for funeral directors is conservative. No minis or stiletto heels, please. If you can't keep the miniskirt in the closet, well, don't even consider this career. Wild hair colors, visible body piercings and tattoos are out as well, and will relegate an aspiring funeral director to a futile job search. Not too long ago even beards were considered extreme. It's wise to remember that we generally deal with older folks as well as clergy. (Mosca, p. 2)

To mandate strict dress code enforcement, the funeral profession is required to overlap other fields where body art and visible tattoos are addressed. Handbooks are a

great resource tool for providing guidelines for both employer and employee because they address issues specific to each funeral home directly and in writing. Employers rely on personnel handbooks and books provided by human resource management companies documenting the proper dress code for their specific funeral homes (M. Krause, personal communication, April, 2012). Consideration should be given to providing students with funeral home employee handbooks to specifically illustrate that visible body art and tattoos are not permitted in the workplace.

Semantic Differential Scale

This study used a Semantic Differential Scale, which is a rating scale invented by C. E. Osgood (1957) consisting of a list of opposite adjectives to measure the connotative meaning, or cultural or emotional association, of objects, events, and concepts. These connotations are used to determine attitudes towards particular objects, events, or concepts. Osgood and Suci (1957) stated that the semantic differential is “a very general way of getting at a certain type of information, a highly *generalizable technique of measurement* which must be adapted to the requirement of each research problem to which it is applied.” (Osgood & Suci, p. 76).

The basis for the semantic differential measure used in this study was that created by Levin (1988) in his study conducted on age stereotyping. The scale consisted of pairs of extreme opposite adjectives separated by seven spaced numbers ranging from 7 on the left to 1 on the right, with 7 being positive and 1 being negative.

These characteristics were selected from lists of age stereotypes included in Butler’s summary description of the cultural image of the elderly in America and the National Council on the Aging report of the results of the Louis Harris (1975) Survey of American adults. (Levin, 1988, p. 141)

Semantic differentials can be used to measure opinions, attitudes and values on a psychometrically controlled scale. Respondents in this study were asked to use the scale to rate the pictures according to their perceptions of the hireability of the persons in the pictures.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the history of both the funeral professions' attire and dress code and tattoos and body art. In addition, contemporary views of visible body art and employer perceptions of mortuary science graduates was discussed. Finally, the semantic differential scale and its uses were explained.

Chapter 3

Methods

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of employers regarding the appearance of females and males with body art based on photographs and whether positive or negative perceptions were related to employers by the extent of personal tattoos. The parts of this chapter include research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, hireability measures, and summary.

Research Design

The purpose of the study was to determine whether employers report differences in hireability of people based on appearance. A very small sample of 10 individuals reviewed the survey questions to determine if any questions or procedures were confusing. A pre-pilot test of eight people was conducted prior to sending out the questionnaire to ensure the accuracy of the wording. The study instrument was pilot-tested by 10 participants. The study determined whether the extent of body art had an effect on the individual's hireability. This way, the inter-rater agreement, or rather the magnitude of the degree of agreement by the raters (kappa), was determined before adoption of the instrument. It was expected that this coefficient of this kappa statistic would be at least 0.80.

Once a reasonable degree of agreement among the independent raters was established, the study also determined whether differences in hireability existed based on the gender of the respondents, the gender of the photo subjects, the extent of the tattoos and their corresponding interactions.

The study determined whether employers based hireability on the existence of visible body art for both males and females. In particular, it collected data to answer the following research questions:

1. What are employers' perceptions regarding hireability of individuals based on extent of visible body art?
2. Are there differences in the employers' perceptions regarding visible body art based on the gender of the individuals in the photographs?
3. What are the differences in perceptions regarding visible body art based on respondent's age, gender, and their own extent of visible body art?

Population and Sample

Respondents for this study were selected from members of the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA). Selection of respondents from this organization provided the needed diverse sample of age, gender, and possession of personal visible body art of people in the funeral profession.

Members on an email list provided by the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA) were sent the survey instrument. The ICCFA was used rather than the NFDA (National Funeral Directors Association) because there was a potential of overlap in these two organizations. According to their website (About ICCFA, 2013), this organization was originally called the Association of American

Cemetery Superintendents and was founded in 1887 by a group of 18 cemeterians whose goal was to improve the appearance and operations of their properties. Throughout its first century of operation, the association grew in size and mission and underwent several name changes, but it remained a national cemetery-only organization. In 1996, the association became the International Cemetery and Funeral Association, expanding its membership to include funeral homes and other related businesses and extending its reach beyond U.S. borders. In 2007, “cremation” was added to the name to more accurately reflect the operations and goals of its membership.

Today, the ICCFA is composed of more than 7,500 cemeteries, funeral homes, crematories, memorial designers and related businesses worldwide. It serves and supports these members through a host of benefits designed to increase their management proficiency and improve their businesses--from regular updates on government and legal issues, to educational meetings, to a variety of services and products tailored to meet their needs. The organization’s mission, as stated on its website (<http://www.iccfa.com>), is providing "exceptional education, networking and legislative guidance and support to progressive cemetery, funeral and cremation professionals worldwide" ("Our Mission" section of Application for Membership).

ICCFA members must adhere to the following code of ethics:

As Guardians of a Nation’s Heritage, we pledge to care for the remains of those entrusted to us with dignity, respect, and professional skill, whether at a funeral home, crematory or cemetery; to honor the wishes of the deceased and their family and to serve all families with respect, understanding and confidentiality; to administer and safeguard all advance planning and permanent memorialization funds for their lawful and intended purpose; to protect and preserve all interment sites and relevant historical data entrusted to us; and to be guided by the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations set by governing bodies with

jurisdiction over our activities in the ownership, management and operation of a funeral home, crematory, cemetery or related endeavor. (ICCFA ByLaws, "Obligations of Membership" section, Para. 2)

The email list sent by ICCFA consisted of the names and email addresses of all 1484 ICCFA members, as well as the states where the work sites of the funeral home members were located.

Instrumentation

The study followed a quantitative design using photographs which were randomly distributed so each respondent randomly received a different one of the eight photographs. Four of the photographs were of a male subject, and four were of a female subject. The male subject was the same person with four different degrees of tattoos—*none*, *small*, *moderate*, and *extreme*. The photograph representing *none* had no tattoos at all; the *small* degree of tattoo depicted one tattoo on the left cheek; the *moderate* depicted a tattoo on the left cheek and an ear gauge and a tattoo behind and beneath the ear gauge; and the *extreme* depicted a facial tattoo, an ear gauge and a tattoo behind and beneath the ear gauge, and visible tattoos on the upper neck. The photographs of the female subject followed this same pattern. The photograph representing *none* had no tattoos at all; the *small* degree of tattoo depicted a star on the cheek; the *moderate* depicted a few stars on the cheek and a tattoo beneath her ear; and the *extreme* had all of the above plus stars on her upper neck. See Appendix A for copies of both the female and male photographs used in the study.

The survey was emailed to the 1484 ICCFA members. Each member was asked if he or she oversaw any aspect of the hiring of funeral directors. If the answer was "no," indicating the person was not part of the hiring at his or her funeral home or cemetery, that person was finished with the survey. If the answer was "yes," that

person was directed to open the email containing the data collection instrument, which consisted of a photograph, a corresponding fictive resume (see Appendix B for copies of both fictive resumes), a semantic differential sheet of bipolar adjectives(see Appendix C for a copy of the final semantic differential scale), a hireability scale (see Appendix D for a copy of the hireability scale) and a demographic form (see Appendix E for a copy of the demographic information form).

The email of each person involved in hiring funeral directors contained one of the eight photographs. The eight photographs were randomly assigned on an equal basis. Respondents were asked to observe the photograph and indicate their perceptions of the person using a 7-point Semantic Differential scale. The visuals were used to determine whether there were any biases to tattoos. In addition to the demographic scale, participants also received an 18-question hireability scale (Appendix D). Responses to this scale measured whether the person would be hired in the respondent's funeral home. The data were collected and analyzed to determine whether there were any correlations between perceptions and hireability.

The Semantic Differential scale being used to rate the photographs ranged from "Attractive," having the highest rating of 7, to "Unattractive," having the lowest possible rating of 1. Also, a similar 7-point Semantic Differential scale was used with "not intelligent" having the highest possible rating of 7, while "intelligent" representing the lowest rating of 1. In both cases of outcome variables, 7 was most agreeable:

ATTRACTIVE 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 UNATTRACTIVE

and

NOT INTELLIGENT 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 INTELLIGENT

Instrument Development from Pilot Data. Individuals who were considered to be experts in their fields were recruited to determine the terms to be used in the Semantic Differential Scale. See Appendix F for the names of the panel members. Two different validation teams were formed to choose the terms, and eight sample scales with opposing characteristics were submitted. See Appendix G for copies of the different semantic differential scale terms. All scales were reviewed, and the final scale of 30 opposing terms was whittled down from a high of 172 terms to the 30 terms the experts considered most manageable for respondents and relevant to the topic of hireability. Appendix I is the version of the semantic differential scale used for the pilot test.

Demographic Information Form. Respondents were required to answer questions about themselves, including their gender and whether they had visible body art, as well as the number of their visible tattoos (Appendix E). This information about respondents was collected after they rated the male and female subjects for hireability. Specifically, respondents were asked if they were male or female and what age category they fell into (21-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+). Responses of individuals younger than 21 were not included in the data analysis. Individuals were also asked whether they had visible tattoos themselves, how many, and whether they would categorize their tattoos as small, moderate, or extreme.

Participants answering the survey both in its entirety and partially were included for the study. No incentives were given to respondents. Respondents were ensured anonymity with regard to answering this survey.

Photographs. A major part of the study was the acquisition of photographs to be utilized as stimulus items for the study. There were two sets of photographs, one for the male and one for the female. Each set of photographs ranged from no tattoos to extreme tattoos (Appendix A).

Permission to Use Photographs. All the individuals whose photos were used in this research provided permission to use their photographic likenesses. See Appendix H for letters of permission to use the photographs.

Semantic Differential Scale. This study used a Semantic Differential Scale, which is a type of rating scale invented by Osgood (Osgood & Suci, 1957) to measure the connotative meaning of objects, events, and concepts. The connotations are used to derive the attitude towards the given object, event, or concept. Semantic differentials can be used to measure opinions, attitudes, and values on a psychometrically controlled scale(Osgood &Suci, 1957).

In *The Measurement of Meaning*, Osgood (Osgood & Suci, 1957) discussed the semantic differential scale:

Although we often refer to the semantic differential as if it were some kind of “test,” having some definite set of items and a specific score, this is not the case. To the contrary, it is a very general way of getting at a certain type of information, a highly *generalizable technique of measurement* which must be adapted to the requirement of each research problem to which it is applied. (Osgood &Suci, 1957, pp. 76)

The concepts and scales used in studies are not standardized, but rather are developed based upon the purpose of the particular research. Osgood (Osgood & Suci, 1957) continues,

Standardization, and hence comparability, lies in the allocation of concepts to a common semantic space defined by a common set of general factors, despite variability in the particular concepts and scales employed. It is true, of course, that in some areas of measurement, e.g., psychotherapy or attitude, a particular form of the differential, with standardized concepts and scales, may be developed, but there is no general “semantic differential scale” as such. (Osgood Suci, 1957, pp. 76-77)

Data Collection

The data collection instrument consisted of:

- a. A series of photographs of which a single one was provided to each potential respondent, as well as a fictive resume of the photographed person. Two fictive resumes were used. The matching male resume was included with each of the male photographs, and the matching female résumé was included with each of the female photographs. The background information on both resumes was the same; the only difference in the resumes was the names. A male name was used on the male resume, and a female name was used on the female resume.
- b. A semantic differential sheet of bipolar adjectives,
- c. A demographic form, and
- d. A hireability questionnaire.

The actual survey took no longer than 10 minutes to complete. A reminder was sent via email within 10 days to 2 weeks to all members again, since the researcher had no way of knowing who had responded. A follow-up reminder was sent a third time in an effort to improve the response rate. Depending on the response rate on the third

reminder, a decision to resend a fourth time was considered. The demographic form was available to respondents only after they had completed the semantic differential and hireability scales.

Data Analysis

In this study, the main independent variables were visible body art or tattoo, gender of the respondent, and gender of the photo being shown. Depending on the average number of tattoos, the variable of visible body art was put into four distinct ordinal categories—none, small, medium, and extreme. The *none* category indicated the photos with no tattoos; the *small* category defined the photos with 1 to 2 visible body tattoos. The *medium* defined the photos with 3 to 4 visible body tattoos, while the *extreme* was assigned to the photos of individuals with more than four visible body tattoos.

The main dependent variable in this study was employers' perception as measured on a 7-point Semantic Differential scale. In order to address the given research questions, this study utilized the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) to conduct factorial Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to answer the main research questions:

1. What are employers' perceptions regarding hireability of individuals based on extent of visible body art or tattoo? To answer this research question, the study conducted simple descriptive statistics on the outcome dependent variable of the employers' perceptions to obtain mean, range, and standard deviation.

2. Are there differences in the employers' perceptions regarding visible body art based on the gender of the individuals in the photographs? This research question was analyzed using a 2 x 4 factorial ANOVA to determine whether significant mean

differences existed between male and female potential hires in the employers' perceptions regarding the extent of visible body art.

3. What are the differences in perceptions regarding visible body art based on respondents' age, gender, and their own extent of visible body art?

The study determined employers' perceptions of the hireability of people with visible body art. From expected overall purposive sample record of 1484, it was hoped that a desired sample size of at least 500 would be achieved for the study in order to achieve power of .80 and a medium effect size ($f^2 = .25$). A power analysis was conducted to determine the number of participants needed in this study (Cohen, 1988).

Hireability Measure

Using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), the employer participants indicated their perceived hireability of the potential candidate on an 18-item measure using a validated hireability scale by Rudman and Glick (2001) which is reported $\alpha = 0.94$. Since the data collection is an adopted version with an already known value of internal consistency measure, the pilot study aimed to achieve an approximate value of the Cronbach's alpha to assess how it would perform during the actual study.

The summated scales were used in surveying the instruments to probe underlying constructs that the researcher wanted to measure which consisted of indexed responses to dichotomous or multi-point questionnaires, which were later summed to arrive at a resultant score associated with a particular respondent. This provided a means to gather predictor variables for use in objective models. The

Cronbach's alpha determined the internal consistency or average correlation of items in the survey instrument to gauge the reliability.

Sample items included: "This is a very strong candidate for the position," "I would choose to interview the applicant for the job," and "This candidate would be a dedicated employee." The full scale is included in Appendix D. Responses to the items were averaged. Higher scores meant better potential or more hireable as a future employee.

A factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the relationship between hireability scores and respondent gender (male/female), gender of the photo being shown (male/female), and tattoo (none/small/medium/extreme) were used to test the hypothesis. Also, their interaction effects were investigated. In all the analyses, an alpha cut-off of 0.05 was used to test for statistical significance.

Summary

This chapter discussed the methods used in the study. It included research design, population sample, and instrumentation (instrument development from the pilot data, the demographic information form, the photographs of the subjects used in this research, and the Semantic Differential Scale). Also discussed were data collection, data analysis, and hireability measure.

Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of employers regarding the appearance of females and males with body art based on photographs and whether positive or negative perceptions are related to hireability by employers given the extent of personal tattoos of a potential hire.

This chapter represents the findings of the study. Included in the chapter are: (a) demographic profile of respondents, (b) survey respondents by photographs received, (c) survey results, (d) observations, and (e) summary.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

In the study, respondents were selected from members of the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA) in such a way that the selection provided the needed diverse sample of age, gender, and possession of personal visible body art of people in the funeral profession. Out of the 1484 surveys sent out to the prospective respondents, 151 respondents filled out and sent back the surveys. This represents about 10.2% initial response rate. Due to incomplete information, 74 of the 1512 survey respondents were discarded, so that 77 were used in the analysis. It was not known what percentage of the respondents were in a position of hiring.

As shown in Table 1, of the 77 potential employers who participated in the study, 68 (83.3%) were males, and 9 (11.7%) were females. In relation to age, 3 (3.9%) were

aged between 20-29 years, 6 (7.8%) were aged between 30-39 years, 13 (16.9%) were aged between 40-49 years, 32 (41.6%) were aged between 50-59 years, and 23 (29.9%) were aged 60+ years. This means that 88.4% were between the ages of 40 to 60+ years. The largest percentage of respondents, 68 (88.4%) of the respondents, reported to have had no body tattoos. In terms of positions, 9 (11.7%) reported to having body tattoos; 44 (57.1%) were in executive management positions, 27 (35.1%) were in management positions, and 6 (7.8%) were in staff professional positions. See Table 1 for the demographic profile of respondents in survey. See Appendix E for the demographic questions.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in the Survey

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	68	88.3
Female	9	11.7
Age		
20-29yrs	3	3.9
30-39yrs	6	7.8
40-49yrs	13	16.9
50-59yrs	32	41.6
60+yrs	23	29.9
Having tattoos		
Yes	9	11.7
No	68	88.3
Job title		
Executive management	44	57.1
Management	27	35.1
Staff professional	6	7.8

N=77

Survey Respondents by Photographs Received

In this study, a particular respondent received only one individual photo which depicted either a male or female with a particular number representing the extent of body art or tattoos. Of the 40 female photos shown, 17 (42.5%) had small tattoos, 9 (22.5%) had medium tattoos, and 11 (27.5%) had large tattoos, while only 3(7.5%) had none. Also, of the 37 male photos shown, 7 (18.9%) had small tattoos, 9 (24.4%) had medium tattoos, and 13(35.1%) had large tattoos, while 8(21.6%) had none. Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics that give the characteristics of the photos and extent of body tattoos used in the survey. See Appendix A for both the male and female photos.

Table 2

Frequency Matrix of Extent of Tattoo and Gender for the Characteristics of Photos Used in the Survey

Extent of body art	Female	n%	Male	n %
Large	11	27.5	13	35.1
Medium	9	22.5	9	24.4
Small	17	42.5	7	18.9
None	3	7.5	8	21.6
<i>Total</i>	40	100.0	37	100.0

N=77

Survey Results

Research Question 1. What are employers' perceptions regarding hireability of individuals based on extent of visible body art?

The part of the questionnaire that sought to measure perception consisted of 18 items which solicited the perceptions of a potential employer about hireability of an individual based on the photo shown (see Appendix D). The study participants were asked to rate their perceptions on a 7-point Likert scale consisting of pairs of extreme opposite adjectives separated by 7 spaced numbers from 7 on the left to 1 on the right with 7 being positive and 1 being negative.

The scale was utilized in this study to measure the perceptions of potential funeral profession employees. Therefore, a score of between 3.5 and 4.5 may be interpreted as neutral. Any statement score above 4.5 would suggest that the potential employer had a positive perception about the hireability of the employee whose photograph was shown based on the extent of body art. Likewise, any statement score below 3.5 would suggest that the potential employer had a negative perception about the hireability of the employee based on the photo.

Table 3 presents the overall summary statistics for perception and hireability measures. As shown in Table 3, both perception and hireability measures have very small negative skewness and large kurtosis values. These were possible indications that the data distributions on these variables are about symmetrical (the skewness values were approximately equal to 0) but are more peaked (both have kurtosis values greater than 1). Further descriptive analysis indicated that the hireability measure had more variability than perception. Also, perception had a reliability coefficient (Cronbach

alpha) of 0.89 while hireability had a reliability coefficient (Cronbach alpha) of 0.94. These reliability coefficients indicated that there was high agreement between the independent raters on both perception and hireability.

Table 3

Descriptive Analysis of Perception Score by Extent of Body Art

Variable	mean	SD	max	min	skewness	kurtosis
Perception	4.04	0.31	4.60	3.07	- 0.23	3.79
Hireability	4.51	0.93	6.50	2.17	- 0.13	2.88

N=77

Also, Table 4 presents the numbers, means, and standard deviation summary statistics of the perception scale by the extent of the body tattoos in the photos based on number of responses. The descriptive analysis results indicate that the perception ratings across all the four categories of the extent of body art were about the same (ranging from 3.9 to 4.1). However, the variability of the perception score for those with no body art was smallest.

The comparison of the results in Tables 3 and 4 indicated that overall the potential employers seem to have similar neutral perceptions about the hireability of the possible employees regardless of the extent of their body art. The means and standard deviations of their perception scores are comparable across the four categories related to the extent of the body art.

Table 4

Descriptive Analysis of Perception Score by Size of Body Art

Extent of body art	<i>n</i>	mean	<i>SD</i>
Large	24	4.1	0.3
Medium	18	4.1	0.4
Small	24	3.9	0.3
None	11	4.0	0.2

N=77

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to assess the relationship between perception and the extent of body tattoo (none, small, medium, and large). The results of the ANOVA test are summarized in Table 5. The ANOVA test produced non-significant results, $F(3,73)=1.63$, $p=0.18$. This suggests that there was no significant mean perception difference across the four categories related to the extent of the body art. The effect size for this one-way ANOVA (as measured by eta squared) was determined to be 0.06. This represents very small effect size.

Table 5

ANOVA Summary Table of Perceptions for Extent of Body Tattoo

Source	SS	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between	0.46	3	0.15	1.63	0.18
Within	6.84	73	0.09		
Total	7.29	76	0.09		

N=77; eta squared = 0.06

Research Question 2. Are there differences in the employers' perceptions regarding visible body art based on the gender of the photo? This research question sought to determine whether the gender of the individuals in the photographs had any influence on the perceptions of hireability by the potential employers. Before this analysis was conducted, the tenability of the four assumptions of the two-independent sample *t* tests was assessed. Sampling of the respondents in the survey was random. As such, the assumption of independence may hold for these data. The two groups of female and male photos were independent of each other. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was not significant ($p > 0.05$), which suggested the population of the sample was normally distributed. Also, the Levene's test of homogeneity of variance produced a non-significant result ($p > 0.05$)

The two independent samples *t* tests conducted for difference in mean perception by gender of the individuals in the photographs also revealed a non-significant result, $t(1,75) = 0.41$, $p = 0.66$. The effect size for this analysis (as measured by Cohen's *d*) was determined to be about 0.1, which represents a very small effect size measure. These results further suggest that the gender of the individuals in the photographs as shown to the potential employers did not have any significant influence in their measure of perception for employment consideration.

Research Question 3. What are the differences in perceptions regarding visible body art based on respondent's age and gender?

ANOVA Assumptions. For each ANOVA test by respondent gender and age based on perception scores, Bartlett's test for equal variances was conducted to determine if there was statistical evidence that this assumption had been violated. The

results revealed $p = 0.529$, which suggested that the test was not significant. This implies there was no evidence the assumption had been violated. As such, the ANOVA test was appropriate.

Assumptions of Normalcy. For this analysis, normality tests were conducted for all the ANOVA by assessing the properties of normal distribution by Shapiro-Wilk's W , and goodness-of-fit tests by Kolmogorov-Smirnov D .

The results indicated that Shapiro-Wilk ($W = 0.889$, $p < W = 0.623$) and Kolmogorov-Smirnov ($D = 0.063$, $p > D > 0.13$). These diagnostic findings suggest that the data used was normally distributed so that the assumption of normality was appropriate.

Assumptions of Independence. To establish independence of observations during data collection, while data were being collected, all respondents completed their respective online surveys independently without any interactions. There were no identifications of the respondents on the online surveys which bolstered anonymity.

In deciding which type of sum-of-squares to use for this unbalanced factorial ANOVA analysis, it was necessary to explain why the design was unbalanced. The lack of balance in the design was due to attrition and missing data of the participants. As such, lack of balance in the design sample did not reflect the lack of balance in the population being studied. These considerations led to using Type III sums-of-squares analysis in the ANOVA tests.

When overall means and standard deviations were compared for respondent gender and age, they were similar overall at about $M = 4.0$ (Female $M = 3.97$; Male $M =$

4.05) and overall $SD = 0.3$ (Female $SD = 0.20$; Male $SD = 0.32$) respectively. Table 6 provides a summary of this descriptive analysis by the gender of the photo.

Research question 3 was answered using ANOVA tests. The analysis revealed that there was no significant respondent gender main effect, $F(1, 76) = 1.09, p = 0.42$, of the mean perception between male and female potential employers on the potential hires based on their body art. See Table 7 for the ANOVA summary table. These results suggested no sufficient evidence to conclude that the respondent's gender had an effect on perception. Also, there appeared to be no significant respondent age main effect, $F(4, 76) = 1.00, p = 0.42$, of the mean perception among the five age categories of the employers on their potential hires based on their body art. As such, there was no sufficient evidence to conclude that there was a relationship between age of the employers and their perceptions of the hires based on body art.

Table 6

Descriptive Analysis of Perception Score by Respondent Age and Gender

Age of respondent	Gender of Respondent								
	<i>n</i>	Female		<i>n</i>	Male		<i>n</i>	Total	
		mean	<i>SD</i>		mean	<i>SD</i>		mean	<i>SD</i>
20-29 yrs	1	4.20	0.00	2	4.10	0.14	3	4.13	0.12
30-39 yrs	1	4.13	0.00	5	4.28	0.25	6	4.27	0.24
40-49 yrs	2	3.80	0.09	11	4.10	0.27	13	4.03	0.27
50-59 yrs	4	4.05	0.83	28	4.03	0.36	32	4.03	0.34
60+ yrs	1	3.60	0.00	22	4.05	0.31	23	3.98	0.31
Total	9	3.97	0.20	68	4.05	0.32	77	4.04	0.31

Note: $N = 68$

Table 7 represents the factorial ANOVA results that tested how age and gender were related to perception of potential employers regarding body art of tattoos. The overall model with both gender and age covariates was not significant, $F(9, 76) = 0.76$, $p = 0.65$.

The analysis revealed no significant relationship between respondent's gender and perception, $F(1, 76) = 1.09$, $p = 0.42$. Also, the gender and age interaction effect on perception was not significant, $F(4, 76) = 0.55$, $p = 0.70$. This non-significant interaction would suggest that how respondent's gender was related to perception did not depend on the respondent age.

Table 7

ANOVA Summary Table of Perceptions for Respondent Gender and Age

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	Eta Squared
Model	0.68	9	0.08	0.76	0.65	
Gender	0.11	1	1.11	1.09	0.42	0.01
Age	0.39	4	0.90	1.00	0.42	0.05
Gender* Age	0.22	4	0.05	0.55	0.70	0.03
Error	6.62	67	0.10			
Total	7.30	76	0.10			

The effect sizes for the gender, age, and their interaction (as measured from partial eta squared) for this factorial ANOVA analysis were determined to be 0.01, 0.05, and 0.03 respectively, as shown in Table 7. These represented small effect sizes.

Observations

Respondents to the survey were primarily men. Traditionally, funeral directors and funeral home owners have been male. Since funeral practice has been changing, currently 52% of mortuary science students now are female. However, according to the survey, the respondents were primarily male who indicated they did not have biases, shift has begun to occur, but it is not yet reflected in the management positions. Three respondents called and asked whether their bosses had asked me to send them the survey. This could potentially mean that they were nervous about answering subjectively because HR professionals have a code of conduct regarding divulging personal biases about applicants.

Because this was an anonymous Qualtrics survey, the study could not track which person received which picture, so additional steps had to be taken to make this determination. For the future, it would be useful to set up a survey in a way that it would be clear which picture each respondent received.

In this research, the receptivity to the survey was limited and/or appeared to not be well received. This is a population that has not been regularly exposed to in-field, academic-based surveys. Educating ICCFA members on the importance of the academic side of the industry is critical for the growth of the funeral profession. Employers are the voice of the industry, and their input is very important in developing programs for future funeral directors to bridge the gap between academia and practitioners. When funeral directors and cemetery professionals are made aware of the value of these surveys, either through published articles in the ICCFA Magazine or roundtable discussions at funeral conventions, they may be more receptive to filling out

these surveys because they will recognize they are contributing to the growth of the profession.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of employers regarding the appearance of females and males with body art based on photographs and whether positive or negative perceptions are related to hireability by employers given the extent of personal tattoos of a potential hire. The parts of this chapter include summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research.

Summary

In order to determine whether funeral home employers were biased against visible body art in their hiring of funeral directors, a survey was prepared and sent to members of the International Cemetery, Cremation Funeral Association (ICCFA). The survey was designed to determine whether stereotyping by employers existed against specific photographs of males and females with visible body art and whether the stereotyping was related to the gender, age, and visible body art of respondents. Emails were sent to each email address with a Qualtrics link to the survey. Each survey consisted of a biography of the author, one of the eight photographs of a potential hiree, a fictive resume for the potential hiree, a semantic differential scale, a hireability scale, and a demographic information questionnaire. To obtain maximum response, the survey was sent three times over a course of three weeks, with a total response of 151 surveys; however, only 77 were usable.

Conclusions

Based on the results of this research, the conclusions of the study follow.

1. Perceptions of hireability based on extent of body art were largely neutral, which suggested there was not a strong bias one way or the other.
2. The respondents' perceptions of visible body art based on the gender of the persons in the photographs were neutral. This was indicative of no strong bias towards either set of photos.
3. There appeared to be no connection between employers' perception of visible body art and their age.
4. The perceptions of visible body art by employers based on their gender were neutral.
5. The perceptions of visible body art by employers based on their own extent of body art were neutral.

Implications

The findings from the study may have implications for funeral home owners, mortuary science students, cemetery owners, funeral directors, recruiters, academics, theorists, practitioners, and researchers related to promoting learning practices and learning culture while encouraging transfer of training.

Funeral Home Owners. The study indicated there was no direct correlation between visible body art and hiring practices, which means funeral home owners surveyed had no bias against visible body art.

Mortuary Science Students. Although the number of students enrolling in mortuary schools may be increasing, funeral service is still a conservative profession.

However, based on the results of the study, mortuary science students with visible body art would be still be hired by the funeral home professionals who completed the survey.

Cemetery Owners. The study indicated there was no direct correlation between visible body art and hiring practices, which implies that the cemetery owners surveyed had no bias against visible body art and would hire tattooed individuals.

Funeral Directors. Public perceptions of tattoos may vary by age, though the results from this research indicated a neutral response with no bias towards individuals with tattoos. Therefore, funeral directors need to be aware that it may not matter as much which mortuary science graduates (with/without tattoos) are being hired.

Although the funeral directors may not be biased against body art, they may consider other potential biases (not addressed in this study) relevant to the deceased or family.

Recruiters. Depending on the area/region of the country, some recruiters may be more open to hiring a funeral director with visible tattoos. Recruiters were not targeted in the study.

Although some literature still indicates a negative standpoint towards males and females with visible tattoos, since beginning the beginning of this research, the prevalence of tattoos in the workplace has increased tremendously. The study results indicated no bias against hiring candidates with visible body art; however, academics, theorists, practitioners, and researchers promoting learning practices and learning culture should be aware of the historical nature of this conservative profession and should not assume that visible body art will be acceptable to all funeral home hiring managers.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings from this research, there are several recommendations for further study:

1. Because the study did not request which part of the country (city, state, region) the respondents reside, further research could investigate if parts of the country are more biased towards or against body art. It might be enlightening to know whether liberal areas, such as California or the Northeast, as opposed more conservative areas, such as the deep South, would be more open to employing not just funeral directors, but any hires with visible tattoos.

2. Additional research could investigate the ethnicity of the survey respondent to determine if any biases towards potential hires with body art might exist.

3. Questions were raised about the male subject who depicted facial hair and whether that may present a bias. Further research could investigate whether or not facial hair is a factor in hiring.

4. Additional research could be conducted using face-to-face interviews which could potentially ensure more open and in-depth responses, as opposed to an online survey. In this method, the interviewer could assure the individual that this is an anonymous survey, since many Human Resource (HR) professionals are bound by a code of ethics to respond neutrally regardless of their subjective opinions. A face-to-face interview could potentially ensure open responses.

5. Further research could investigate the cultural background of individuals to determine if cultural bias exists towards hiring people with tattoos.

6. Religious background of individuals might potentially affect how responses to the questions and thus, future research could be conducted on issues related to religious background.

7. Additional research could be conducted on generational funeral homes to investigate if there are predisposed biases of individuals from multi-generation conservative funeral homes.

8. Future research could target the perceptions of cemetery owners who were not targeted in this study.

9. Future research could target the perceptions of recruiters who may not be as aware of the funeral home culture and who were also not targeted in this study.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Photographs of Male and Female Subjects



Appendix A cont.



Appendix B: Fictive Resumes of Male and Female Subjects

John Roberts
4606 Tamiami Trail, Venice, FL 34287
941-555-0649; johnroberts@bis.com

Objective: To obtain a Funeral Director/Embalmer Internship

Background Summary:

Successful completion of the ABFSE National Board Licensing Exam.
Demonstrated ability to empathize and interact with at-need families.
Ability to multitask and successfully manage a diverse set of responsibilities.
Strong communication skills, both oral and written.
Computer literate with extensive office experience.

Education:

A.S, Mortuary Science2013
St. Petersburg Community College, St. Petersburg, FL
GPA: 3.6

Professional Experience

Practicum: Wilson Funeral Home, Venice, FloridaFall, 2012

This position provided me an exposure to all aspects of funeral service, including making at-need arrangements and pre-arrangements; extensive family interaction; writing of obituaries; conducting of funerals, visitations, and prayer services; embalming, dressing, cosmetizing, and casketing of human remains.

Payroll Clerk..... 2007-2011
Thomas Gibson Associates, Charlotte, NC

Entered payroll into the payroll management system on a weekly basis; proofed payroll before distribution; maintained calendars for all employees; completed mortgage verifications; input all employee data into the system; designed payroll forms; made bank deposits and withdrawals for client funds.

Professional Affiliations

Member, International Cemetery, Cremation Funeral Association (ICCF)

Ann Roberts
4606 Tamiami Trail, Venice, FL 34287
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Objective: To obtain a Funeral Director/Embalmer Internship

Background Summary:

Successful completion of the ABFSE National Board Licensing Exam.
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Ability to multitask and successfully manage a diverse set of responsibilities.
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Professional Affiliations

Member, International Cemetery Cremation Funeral Association (ICCF)

Appendix C: Final Version, Semantic Differential Scale

Semantic Differential Scale—2/3/2014 (Final)

Agreeable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Disagreeable
Attractive	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Unattractive
Coldhearted	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Compassionate
Efficient	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Inefficient
Flexible	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Rigid
Detached	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Friendly
Lazy	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Hard-working
Dishonest	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Honest
Organized	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Disorganized
Unprofessional	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Professional
Responsible	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Irresponsible
Insecure	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Secure
Stable	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Unstable
Team-Player	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Loner
Intolerant	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Tolerant

Appendix D: Hireability Scale Questions

HIREABILITY SCALE QUESTIONS

		<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<u>1</u>	This is a very strong candidate for the position	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>2</u>	This candidate would be a dedicated employee.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>3</u>	I respect the applicant.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>4</u>	I would choose to interview the applicant for the job.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>5</u>	Many people would have respect for this applicant.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>6</u>	I would hire the applicant for the job.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>7</u>	I hope the applicant finds employment soon.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>8</u>	This candidate deserves to make a good salary.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>9</u>	This candidate would work well with others.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>10</u>	The applicant would likely be hired for the job.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>11</u>	This candidate would be committed to the job.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>12</u>	This candidate would sacrifice a lot for the job.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>13</u>	The applicant deserves this job.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>14</u>	Once hired, this applicant would rise quickly within the organization's hierarchy.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>15</u>	Once hired, I would quickly promote this applicant	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>16</u>	I would offer this candidate top salary.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>17</u>	I would entrust this candidate with important projects.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>18</u>	This candidate would be a good team player.	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>

Appendix E: Demographic Information of Survey Respondents

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF SURVEY RESPONDENT

1. What is your gender? Male Female

2. What age category do you fall into?
 21-29; 30-39; 40-49; 50-59; 60+. years

3. What is your job title? _____

4. Do you oversee any aspect of hiring for your organization?
 Yes No

5. Do you yourself have a body tattoo? Yes No

6. If Yes, is your tattoo on your face, neck, hands or wrist?
 Yes No

7. How would you describe your body art?
 Small tattoo (the size of a quarter or less)
 Moderate tattoo (approximately the size of your palm)
 Large tattoo, multiple tattoos, or wrist/neck band tattoo

Appendix F: Expert Validation Panel

EXPERT VALIDATION PANEL

A panel of experts was consulted in order to determine terms to be used for the Semantic Differential Scale. Panel members brainstormed and came up with lists of opposing characteristics that they felt would be influential regarding hireability in the funeral profession. A high of 112 terms were suggested. This number was whittled down to the final version of 30 characteristics that the panel considered most relevant to hiring in the funeral profession.

The following people reviewed and assisted me in condensing the Semantic Differential Scale topics to the final version.

Expert Panel Validation 1:

Ezzard Bryant, Jr. - Adult Education Doctoral Candidate

Lynne Key, Ph.D. - HR Professional

Patti Sullivan - HR Professional

James Taylor - Adult Education Doctoral Candidate

Expert Panel Validation 2:

Beth Brightman - Adult Education Doctoral Candidate

Mary DiSanzo - Editor

Gianina Hayes - Adult Education Doctoral Candidate

Anthony Hill – Adult Education Doctoral Candidate

Appendix G: Initial Draft, Semantic Differential Scale

**Semantic Differential Anchor Terms for Files (Instant Impressions) Formed
During Selection Processes
9/11/2013**

Strongly Positive Anchor Term	Strongly Negative Anchor Term
1. Assertive	Passive
2. Proficient	Inept
3. Intelligent	Ignorant
4. Courageous	Fearful
5. Bold	Timid
6. Powerful	Weak
7. Inspirational	Insignificant
8. Creative	Unimaginative
9. Flexible	Rigid
10. Fast	Slow
11. Hard-working	Lazy
12. Amiable	Aloof
13. Professional	Amateur
14. Eager	Apathetic
15. Disciplined	Unprincipled
16. Educated	Ill-informed
17. Team-Player	Self-focused
18. Collaborative	Uncooperative

19. Trustworthy	Irresponsible
20. Reliable	Undependable
21. Honest	Deceitful
22. Dedicated	Indifferent
23. Self-Starter	Unmotivated
24. Goal-Oriented	Random
25. Articulate	Incoherent
26. Optimistic	Pessimistic
27. Culturally Sensitive	Culturally Insensitive
28. Organized	Disheveled
29. Problem-Solver	Rebel
30. Rational	Unstable
31. Tenacious	Weak
32. Committed	Disloyal
33. Respectful	Insolent

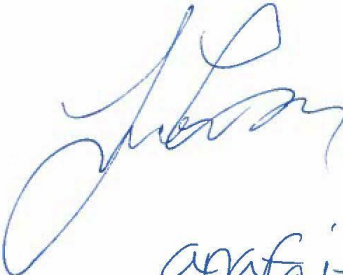
Appendix H: Letters of Permission for Use of Photographs

11/12/13

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that Tanya Scotece has permission to use my photographs and duplicate them for the purpose of her dissertation study.

Sincerely,



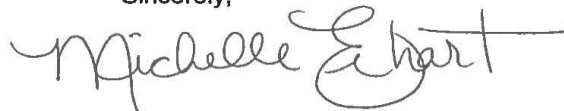
arafai@psd
yahoo.com

12/21/2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that Tanya Scotece has permission to use my photographs and duplicate them for the purpose of her dissertation study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Erhart". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Michelle.Erhart@farleyfuneralhome.com

Appendix I: Pilot Test Questionnaire

**Semantic Differential Anchor Terms for Files (Instant Impressions)
Formed During Selection Processes
9/11/2013**

Strongly Positive Anchor Term	Strongly Negative Anchor Term
1. Assertive	Passive
2. Proficient	Inept
3. Intelligent	Ignorant
4. Courageous	Fearful
5. Bold	Timid
6. Powerful	Weak
7. Inspirational	Insignificant
8. Creative	Unimaginative
9. Flexible	Rigid
10. Fast	Slow
11. Hard-working	Lazy
12. Amiable	Aloof
13. Professional	Amateur
14. Eager	Apathetic
15. Disciplined	Unprincipled
16. Educated	Ill-informed

About the Author

Tanya Scotece is a funeral director and Certified Celebrant with Farley Funeral Homes & Crematory in Venice, Florida. She became interested in the funeral profession at age twelve, when she attended her first visitation in Connecticut. After working as a human resources manager in the health care industry, she decided to return to school and pursue her interest in funeral service.

In 2005, Tanya graduated from mortuary school. After moving to Florida from Connecticut, she continued her education and obtained a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's degree in criminal forensics. She has completed her Ph.D. at the University of South Florida (Tampa) in curriculum and instruction with emphasis in adult education.

Because of the relevance to her work in the funeral profession as well as in human resources, she decided to focus her research on funeral service and chose Funeral Service Employers' Perceptions of Body Art and Hireability as the topic for her doctoral dissertation.

Tanya is also a graduate of the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCF) University.