

CONFIDENTIAL RESEARCH MATERIALS—DO NOT CIRCULATE
ITWF NSF Award # 0420434 – Cohort D Interview Protocol

Before we begin, I need to mention a couple of formalities. I am working with Dr. Jeffrey Stanton at Syracuse University on a project funded by the National Science Foundation. This research has been approved by Syracuse University's institutional review board and given project number 04130. In this research we are looking at the occupational culture of the information technology workforce. We would like to get your thoughts about your perceptions regarding the IT profession, your basic values and most important, the motives and needs pertaining to your IT career during this 30-minute interview.

All responses will remain confidential. We will aggregate information from many individuals to develop our research conclusions. We will protect your identity and you will not be identified in any of our research. With your agreement, we would like to save the file that contains this interview. Remember that your participation is voluntary and you are free to not answer any question that does not fit your circumstances or that you feel is inappropriate; you may also withdraw from the interview at any time. If you wish to participate, please read and give us the authorization to record and save the file with the interview. Please keep one copy for your records.

I have some questions to ask you about yourself, your job, and your academic training. I will be asking you some questions about professional environment and your perspectives about the profession. I am interested in your honest responses and in finding ways that assist the academic programs that train members of the IT workforces.

CURRENT AND PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE

1. Could you please tell me your **name, job title and tenure**?
2. What is **the highest academic degree** that you obtained? From where?
3. What are your **current job responsibilities**?
4. How many people do you work with?
5. How do you communicate with them most of the time most of the time? (face to face or in a written way?)
6. How many IT people do you work with?
7. How do you communicate with them most of the time?
8. Is there any difference between your preferred way of communication with IT people than with others? Why?
9. How much work experience do you have in an IT job? Could you tell me how different/similar was your previous job from this one?

JOB SATISFACTION IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

1. What do **you like** the most about your occupation?
2. What about the **DISlikes** of your occupation? Could you give me an example of such situation where you feel uncomfortable?
3. How is your interaction with **users**?
4. How is your interaction with **managers**?
5. How is your interaction with **other IT professionals**?
6. Could you tell me what are the most common conflict areas with the IT/IS department? Could you give me an example?

THE OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE OF IT PEOPLE

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1. If I tell you there is an **occupational culture** of the IT people. Do you think is there such a thing? [Say.. IT people having their own jargon, unusual demands, complaints about end-users who do not understand?] Why?
2. If yes, did you **experience** those issues in your job? Could you give me an example?
3. Did you experience some issues during your academic training?
4. Did you ever talk about these issues as a **formal topic in class** while you were a student? If so in what class, about which issues?
5. Do you think that there is a recognized **professional institution or organization in the U.S.** for IT professionals? If yes, which one?
6. Are you part of any professional organization? Which one?
7. Do you have any **questions for me**?

Thank you very much for your assistance!

General Questions:

- What was your internship position?
- What were your duties and responsibilities?
- How did you like it?
- How long was your internship?

Interaction with Others:

- How many people work in your department? How many of these are IT people?
- How would you describe the quality of your **social interactions** with other IT workers in your department?
- What are the most common **work-related issues** that you discuss with other IT workers in your department?
- In your workplace, how frequently do IT workers have to deal with non-IT people?
- Who are the **non-IT people** with whom you interact?
- How easy is it to deal with them? What makes it **easy or difficult**?
- How frequently do IT workers use **jargon**? Do you use jargon? Is that something you like/dislike? Is that an important part of the occupation?
- How important is **communication** to workers in the IT field? What styles of communication have you encountered?

Personal IT Occupation Perspectives:

- In your own words, visualize and describe the IT occupation.
- Why did you choose the IT profession?
- How **demanding** is the IT occupation compared to other occupations? Do you like or dislike the level of demand?
- What are some IT worker **stereotypes**? How accurate are these stereotypes? Do you know IT people who fit these stereotypes? Who? Why? Do you fit these stereotypes? How?

General IT Occupation Perspectives:

- What types of **problems** do IT workers face?
- Do you think that IT workers have a feeling of **control** in their jobs? If yes, give an example.
- Describe the **physical setting** where IT workers perform their job.
- How do IT workers keep up with **changes** in technology? How do you like doing that?
- What are the three most important **personal qualities** in people associated with this career?

Adversity in the IT Occupation:

- Thinking about all the IT work experiences you have had, what are some important things, if any, that might cause someone to decide to leave an IT career?
- How do you perceive age, gender, and ethnic **diversity** in the environment you worked in?
- What issues exist, if any, that you think might especially cause **women** to change their mind away from an IT career?
- What issues exist, if any, that you think might especially cause **minorities** to change their mind away from an IT career?

CD Interview Diagram

Personal Feelings about the IT Occupation:

- How much do you **enjoy** being in the IT occupation? Would you change occupations if you could? Why or why not?
- What do you **like** the most about your IT career? What do you **dislike** the most?
- In a social setting, do you **identify** first with your organization or your occupation?
- In a social setting, do you ever **talk** about your work and occupation?
- Do your **hobbies** involve IT?
- What are the occupations of your best **friends**? Are they IT workers too?

Do you have any questions for me?

Thank You!