

self-select into or out of the organization. By selecting into the organization, the applicant may be more committed to working there than he or she might otherwise have been. When an applicant self-selects out, the organization does not face the costs associated with recruiting, selecting, training, and compensating an employee, only to then have him or her leave because the job did not meet his or her expectations.

A great deal of research has been conducted on the effectiveness of RJPs, which appear to lead to somewhat higher job satisfaction and lower turnover. This appears to be true because providing applicants with realistic expectations about future job characteristics helps them better cope with job demands once they are hired. RJPs also appear to foster the belief in employees that their employer is honest and concerned with employee well-being, which leads to higher levels of organizational commitment.

RJPs may lead applicants to withdraw from the recruitment process, although a recent review suggests that RJPs have little effect on such attrition. This may be good news for employers interested in using RJPs: Providing applicants with realistic information provides employers with more satisfied and committed employees while still maintaining applicant interest in the position. Where the situation may become problematic is when one considers the type of applicant scared away by the realistic message. It appears plausible that the applicants most likely to be dissuaded by the realistic message are high-quality applicants, because they have more options. In fact, research suggests that the negative effects of RJPs on applicant attraction are particularly strong for high-quality applicants (those whose general qualifications are especially strong) and those with direct experience or familiarity with the job.

Although RJPs appear to have both weakly positive consequences (slightly higher job satisfaction and lower turnover among new hires) and negative consequences (slightly reduced ability to hire high-quality applicants), these outcomes have been found to be affected by a number of factors. A review of 40 studies on the effectiveness of RJPs offers more insight into the effect of RJPs:

- RJPs presented very early in the recruitment process are less effective in reducing posthire turnover than those presented just before or just after hiring.
- Posthire RJPs lead to higher levels of job performance than do RJPs presented before hiring.
- Verbal RJPs tend to reduce turnover more than written or videotaped RJPs.
- RJPs are less likely to lead to turnover when the organization "restricts" turnover for a period of time after the RJP (with contracts, above-market salaries, etc.).

In general, these findings suggest that RJPs should be given verbally (rather than in writing or by showing a video) and that it is probably best to reserve their use for later in the recruiting process (RJPs should not be part of the initial exposure of the organization to applicants).<sup>25</sup>