

**The "Gift" of Information:
reciprocity in late 20th century job search strategies
by
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Abstract:

In his book Essai sur le Don, Marcel Mauss argued for the existence and necessity of gift-exchange (or "prestation" or reciprocity) networks. Although Mauss failed to make his argument for their use in the "modern" world, these networks are readily apparent in a number of areas of the "post-modern" world. The purpose of this paper is to examine the use of reciprocity in modern job searches. The data for this paper is the result of ongoing research on the Outplacement industry.

1.0 Introduction

In his work, *Essai sur le Don*, Marcel Mauss (1990) argued for both the existence and necessity of reciprocity networks. Drawing from a variety of ethnographic and historical sources, Mauss (1990:78-79) argues that reciprocity ("prestation" or "gift-exchange") networks serve as the basis for a number of different social sub-systems: law, religion, morality, economics, etc. Mauss fails to make a convincing argument for their application in the "modern" world (cf Douglas, 1990:xv; Mauss, 1990: 65-83). This failure stems from two primary sources. First, he is unable to identify the key components of the then current reciprocity networks. Second, Mauss fails at a conceptual level to identify the commonalities between reciprocity systems and market exchange systems. This leads him to compare the two systems as if they are 1) mutually antagonistic, and 2) at a moral, rather than sociological, level.

What Mauss failed to realize was that reciprocity systems and market exchange systems are both forms of resource distribution systems ("exchange systems") that centre around both socio-cultural resources (e.g. roles, values, ideologies, obligations, etc.) and, more formally "economic" resources (land, "labour", specific material and skill based "commodities", etc.). Furthermore, these systems are not necessarily "mutually antagonistic". And, although one will tend to be dominant in any given social system, the other may well still exist and operate in a restricted sphere.

If we examine exchange systems as a general class, we can readily discern five core components: the "objects" of exchange; media of exchange (in the sense used by McLuhan (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967)); the process of exchange; psycho-cultural reaction complexes; and status/structural obligations. In addition to these core components, we find differing degrees of formalization, forms of political, moral and religious rhetoric and ideology, and informal rules surrounding each component.

I would suggest that there are two key difference between the reciprocity systems examined by Mauss and current modern and post-modern systems. First, in the systems analyzed by Mauss (e.g the Trobriands, the Kwakiutl, etc.) reciprocity is the dominant form of exchange. As such, the degree of systemic formalization is much greater than is the case in modern and post-modern systems, the systems were more "totalizing" in scope and, overall, the exchange system was much smaller in size than current systems. Second, the emphasis on examining economic functions in the modern social sciences has rested on a formalist definition of economic processes which considers reciprocity to be either an "abnormal" form of or a precursor to "true" exchange, by which is meant market exchange (cf Polanyi, 1957:243-270; Hopkins, 1957:270-293).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the use of reciprocity in modern job searches. And while I will freely admit that the *dominant* form of exchange in modern Canada (1995) is that of market exchange, at least in the case of most instances of labour allocation, my ongoing examination of current job search techniques in general and of the outplacement industry in specific has uncovered numerous instances of reciprocity systems.

The paper is organized in the following fashion. First, there is an examination of the objects, media, and forms of exchange that operate in modern job searches (section 2.x). The results of this examination are presented in two tables which are then discussed. This is followed by a more specific examination of the operation of some key instances of reciprocity (section 3.x). Finally, certain implications stemming from this analysis and areas for further research are identified (section 4.x).

The data for this paper comes from a variety of sources including job search seminars, various publications, in depth interviews, and examination of manuals from the Outplacement industry. However, the data presented here should not be considered as the sum total of the actions of the outplacement industry. Rather, the data referred to in this paper reflects only a portion of what the members of the outplacement industry do.

2.0 Exchange Systems

In order for any exchange system to operate, there are a number of preconditions that must exist. First, there must be a class or classes of objects that are available for exchange and this class of objects must have a demand value. This does not imply that the object in question has any transcendent or immutable "value",¹ merely that it is an object which is desired by someone. Second, there must be at least one medium of exchange, or "communicative environment" (cf McLuhan and Fiore, 1967), through which exchange may take place. Third, there must be a process of exchange; in effect, a distribution system, which structures the patterns of exchange.

2.1 Objects of Exchange

The process of job search is not, as is sometimes held, a matter of a free sale of labour power in an open market. First of all, "labour" is not an interchangeable commodity so that there is not a single labour market, but rather a constantly shifting number of specialized labour markets. Second, a "job" is not solely an "economic" relationship, in the formalist sense of the term. Rather, a "job" is a social relationship which includes a set of reciprocal obligations between the employer and the employee of which formally "economic" indicators such as labour power and wage payment are only parts.²

The existence of this social dimension has serious implications for the process of job searches. First, it is not enough for a person to have the minimum technical skills necessary for the job, they must also have the minimum social skills and attitudes necessary. In short, there must be a minimum "fit" between the candidate and the organizational culture and ideology.³ Second, the recruitment of new employees will reflect these dual search criteria (skills and cultural fit) in accordance with politically and

¹ An argument can be made that a certain class of objects does possess an immutable value. Specifically, this is the class of objects that fulfil basic, physiological requirements. This does not, however, assume that any single object has such a value.

² This can clearly be seen in the most commonly given reasons for voluntary turnovers which are a poor "fit" with the corporate culture or a divergence of interests (Murray Axmith, 1993:2). Furthermore, in many social systems, these supposed indicators do not even exist (cf Polanyi, 1957).

³ It is the placement of this "minimum fit" that changes in response to the scarcity or abundance of people with the requisite minimum technical skills. For an interesting example of what happens when the organizational culture and the organizational ideology are in conflict, especially in the hiring of new employees, see Kleinberg (1994).

socially constructed limits.⁴ While the existence of dual search criteria are important, the specifics of their operation are beyond the scope of this paper which is primarily concerned with the process of job search from the potential employee's side.

In current job searches, there are two primary classes of exchange objects: information and presentations of self. Information, as a class of exchange objects, includes job opportunities, contact names and referrals, subject area information (both general and potential opportunities), and opportunity specific information. Another way of describing this class of exchange objects would be as "environment specific". Presentations of self, as a class of exchange objects, includes individual skills, interests, "style", and availability. From the viewpoint of the job searcher, the first class of exchange objects attempts to answer the question "Where might I go?" (value to the searcher). The second class of exchange objects attempts to answer the question "Who am I?" (value to both the searcher and the potential employer).⁵

2.2 Media of Exchange

The concept of a "medium of exchange" is frequently equated with a monetary system ("money").⁶ It is apparent in both the substantivist and formalist definitions, that regardless of its material form (paper, gold, silver, cowrie shells, electronic transfers, cuneiform accounts, etc.), "money" is a *communicative media* as well as any other function it may serve.

In present day Canada, we do not generally accept the use of money as a communicative means in securing a position, although there are exceptions. In general, the use of money as a way of securing a job is currently regarded as unethical and illegal ("bribery"). An example from previous Canadian society would be the purchasing of commissions in various regiments. One current example is the purchase of franchises or distribution rights to a specific commodity or service. Another example of purchasing a position is the creation of a small business or turning into a consultant (self-employment). It is also interesting to note, that even in those situations where a position is purchased from an organization (e.g. franchising), the *social* selection criteria for the organization are still in place, while the skills criteria may not be.

⁴ Including those mandated by a "parent organization", cf Kleinberg (1994: 179-183), or those mandated by a regulatory environment.

⁵ In a socio-technical, rather than a "transcendent/philosophical" sense of the question.

⁶ cf Polanyi (1957:264-266) for a discussion of the formalist and substantivist definitions of "money".

While there are similarities between those situations where a position is purchased and those where it is not, the former are beyond the scope of this paper. When the job search concentrates on securing a position within a pre-existing organization there are, other non-monetary communicative media that are used. In general, there are three major groupings of communicative media:

- electronic media such as list-servs, interactive databases, email, and MUDs (Multi User Dungeons);⁷
- print media, including newspapers, magazines, books, posting boards and certain forms of electronic bulletin boards (e.g. the Electronic Labour Exchange⁸); and
- personal communications, exemplified in the term "networking", but also including (sub-)culturally specific interactional skills.⁹

Each of these media serve to enhance and make possible the process of exchange for specific types of objects.

In addition, each of these media have a moderating effect on the social relations which involve their use. As McLuhan (1964:23) noted:

...the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium -- that is, of any extension of ourselves -- result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology.

However, the introduction of a new medium does not, of necessity, eliminate the use of older media. In many cases, the new medium adds a layer to the act of exchange especially when it cannot replicate all of the functions of the older media.¹⁰

2.3 Process of Exchange

⁷ "Electronic media", as the term is used here, does not refer to the material manifestation of the information but rather to the social arrangement of the information. It should be noted that all of the electronic media listed here are *interactive* in form, and limited in access.

⁸ It should be noted that most publicly available electronic media mimic print media and, as a consequence, may be considered to be analytically the same.

⁹ These interactional skills may also include the ability to dress in specific ways, play certain types of games (e.g. golf, squash, bridge, etc.) and even eat ones food in specific ways.

¹⁰ Several examples of this are the noted resistance to the development of a "cashless" society, and the demands in many cultures that contracts will not be signed unless there is a personal meeting between the principles.

Processes of exchange are, at their core, the structuring of systems of distribution.¹¹ In general, for a given operational environment¹², there are a limited number of ways of structuring the exchange of objects. Polanyi (1957:250-256) identified three major structural forms: reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange.¹³ According to him (Polanyi 1957:250)

[r]eciprocity denotes movements between correlative points of symmetrical groupings; redistribution designates appropriational movements toward a centre and out of it again; [and market] exchange refers here to vice-versa movements taking place as between "hands" under a market system.

I have already argued (3.1 above) that the process of job search does not, in most cases, take place in an open market. Furthermore, with the exception of certain specific industries and certain government attempts (e.g. "workfare"), employment is not achieved through a system of redistribution. Reciprocity appears to operate, at a limited scale, in *certain* areas, but not in others.

If we consider the process of job search as a singular unit, it would seem as if Polanyi's categories are inapplicable. This apparent uselessness, however, breaks down when we consider the specific objects of exchange and media through which this exchange takes place. From the point of view of the job searcher, the categories of redistribution and market exchange are still of limited applicability.¹⁴ What is more relevant is the formalization of the selection process by potential employers. In general, we can distinguish two levels of formalization depending on whether the selection setting or the setting and the rules for selection are available to the searcher. In practice, all of the selection "rules" are rarely known by the candidate,¹⁵ although some may be discovered

¹¹ This section draws extensively on the arguments of Polanyi (1957) and Dalton (1981:69-93).

¹² The term "operational environment" refers specifically to both the "natural" environment and the "social" environment.

¹³ A fourth form, that of the household or *oikos*, is sometimes used by Polanyi and other times not used. I have not included it here since the household is, in effect, a visible organization rather than a pattern of behaviour and, as such, draws on a different conceptualization of "institution" (cf Parsons, 1957:59 fn).

¹⁴ exceptions to this would include government sponsored redistribution programs such as workfare, and UIC placement programs.

¹⁵ And, sometimes, the rules of selection are not consciously known by the people conducting the selection.

as part of the process of gathering opportunity specific information. All such situations are, for the purposes of this current paper, termed as "formal".

In addition to Polanyi's categories, another distribution system is readily apparent when we examine specific objects of exchange. This system might best be described as "gathering". Following the form of Polanyi's definitions quoted above, we can define gathering as the movement of an object freely available within the operational environment to an individual.

<Insert Table 1 and Table 2>

2.4 Discussion

Tables 1 and 2 list various objects of exchange that, according to a variety of sources,¹⁶ constitute the process of a job search. Table 1 examines the class of objects of exchange referred to earlier as "information" (see 3.1). Table 2 examines the class of objects of exchange termed "presentation of self". Each of these general classes is further broken down into specific sub-classes (column 1) and specific "objects" (column 3).

In table 1, the object sub-classes go from the general, "subject area (or industry) information", to the specific, "Job Opportunity". In table 2, the object sub-classes start with the specific (technical) and go to the general (availability). It should also be noted that the sub-classes in both tables also go from the least mutable objects in the temporal present, to the most mutable.

The first choice a job searcher must make is what strategy they will choose to inform potential employers that they are available for work (Table 2, "Availability"). Broadly speaking, there are four strategies that may be followed: broadcast, persistence, networking, and receptive. Each of these strategies is characterized by the methodologies employed in contacting potential employers. The broadcast strategy is characterized by the indiscriminate contacting of all potential employers. The persistence strategy is characterized by contacting a preselected series of potential employers over a long period of time. The networking strategy is characterized by first identifying potential employers and then contacting them after specific opportunities are identified. The receptive strategy is characterized by waiting for opportunities to present themselves.

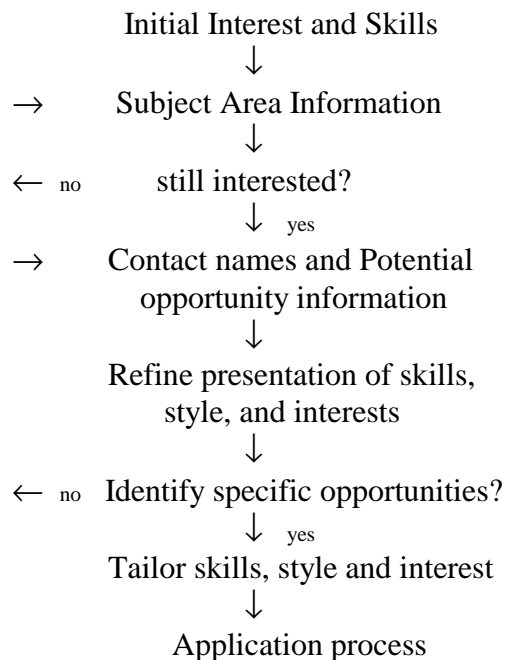
¹⁶ Sources for this table include published material (newspapers, popular job search books, and outplacement industry handouts), fieldnotes from job search seminars, and interviews with career counsellors.

The final object, "network transmission", is not a strategy *per se*, but is rather a way of characterizing the effect of informing the members of a searchers' network that they are looking for work. A potential employer may be informed of the searchers' availability in this way regardless of which strategy the searcher uses. However, the likelihood of a network transmission occurring depends on the scope and reach of the searchers network which is enhanced if a networking strategy is chosen.¹⁷

Each of these availability strategies strongly conditions the use of objects listed in Table 1. The broadcast strategy uses subject area information if it uses any information. The persistence strategy uses contact names, while the receptive strategy uses advertised job opportunities and, occasionally, networked information (both in the job opportunity category). Only the networking strategy potentially uses all of the objects in Table 1.

I want to concentrate my discussion on the networking strategy, since it is the one identified by my sources as the most effective. In order for a searcher to use this strategy effectively, there is a particular pattern that must be followed which is diagrammed in Table 3.

Table 3: Pattern of use in Networking strategy



¹⁷ By analogy, the signal strength of a network transmission is increased if the networking strategy is chosen.

The basic logic behind the networking strategy is fairly straight forward. First, most job opportunities (80%) are never advertised, they are part of the "hidden job market". Second, in order to access these job opportunities, the searcher must get into communication with people who already have access to these hidden jobs. Third, in order to communicate with these people, the searcher must appear to be a potential member of their community. Or, in other words, someone who they will a) want to help with information, and b) someone they will remember favourably.

The key tactic in the final point is to establish a *personal* relationship with a number of individuals. This relationship may be established either by the searchers own initiative - an "unassisted referral" (Table 1) - or by making use of a third party, previously established, personal relationship - an "assisted referral". The tactics for establishing a personal relationship in the case of an unassisted referral are based on the presumed expertise and status of the person contacted. In the case of an assisted referral, the tactics draw on the presumed obligations of the person contacted to the third party who gave the referral.

The strategy is designed to produce four major effects. First, it is designed to gain access to job opportunities in the hidden job market. Second, it is designed to allow the searcher to optimize their self presentations of skills, style, and interests both in order to gain an interview (i.e. to increase their chances of getting through the preliminary selection process), and during the interview itself. Third, the strategy, if used properly, should establish a "reputation" for the searcher which will impact on both their chances of becoming a potential candidate for a position (e.g. network transmission, Table 2), and on their chances of being selected for a position (e.g. references, etc.). The fourth effect is to keep the searcher motivated by giving them a series of achievable goals.

As can be seen from the discussion so far, the entire networking strategy is predicated on the existence of reciprocity systems. In the next section, I will examine the operation of several of these systems, and their psychological and status components, in detail drawing on examples uncovered in my research.

3.0 Structures

In this section, I will examine two components of a reciprocity system: psycho-cultural complexes and status/structural obligations. Both of these components are, at the level of specificity, culture bound.

3.1 Psycho-cultural Complexes

A psycho-cultural complex may be defined as a culturally initiated conditioned response which evokes specific emotional and social reactions from an individual. Mauss has noted a number of these complexes ranging from the obligation to give and receive in specific social settings, to feelings of obligation on the part of a recipient, to feelings of almost "spiritual" ownership over/kinship with an article that has been produced.¹⁸

In general, however, Mauss argues that the primary emotional reaction is a feeling of obligation to the giver which is (usually) accompanied by a fear of personal danger if the gift is not reciprocated. In many of the reciprocity systems Mauss examined, the fear of personal danger was expressed in either magico-religious terms or in regard to expected changes in social status, or both. And the key component of the "personal danger" was always an exclusion from some communal body, whether this exclusion be via death (e.g. the Furies), exile (e.g. for breaking laws of conduct), or loss of social status.

If this is the key psycho-cultural complex at the heart of reciprocity systems, as Mauss argued, then we are left with a number of unanswered questions. First, how does one come to be a part of a given communal body? This is simple to answer in the societies which Mauss examined, however it becomes much more complex in modern societies where birth is much less of a determining factor, and where an individuals' life is less well charted. However, a quick answer to this question would be that an individual must a) "act as if" they are worthy to become part of a given community and b) find a way to become introduced into this communal body.¹⁹ This is the essence of the networking strategy outlined above.

A second question left unanswered by Mauss is how, at a general level, reciprocity can operate in situations of extreme uncertainty. Again, in the societies studied by Mauss, this was not much of a problem, however his inability to answer this question may be one of the reasons why his attempt to extrapolate to 20th century Europe failed. Mauss' attempt to "modernize" his analysis caused him to regard social welfare programs as examples of reciprocity systems (cf Mauss, 1990:65-83; Douglas, 1990:xv).

¹⁸ In fact, Mauss (1990:66) argues that

The economic prejudices of the people, the producers, arise from their firm determination to follow the thing they have produced, and from the strong feeling they have that their handiwork is resold without their having had any share in the profit.

In effect, he would argue that economically induced worker anomie comes from a poorly constructed severing of the bond felt between the producer and the product.

¹⁹ Both of these criteria are met in pre-modern societies through specific rites of passage surrounding a change into adulthood and, in some cases, entry into specific organizations (cf Van Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1969; Trice, 1993).

If Mauss had concentrated instead on grass roots organizations such as city missions, the Salvation Army, the Travellers' Aid Society, etc.,²⁰ or if he had concentrated on information flow he would have found better examples. In situations of extreme uncertainty, the responsibility for reciprocal action shifts in two ways. First, the responsibility for reciprocating may shift from a specific person or identified collective to a general population. In this case, the shift is marked by verbal signs such as "pass it on to the next person who needs help". In effect, this shift to a diffuse obligation means that the opportunity for repayment of the gift is left up to "fortune", "chance", "God" or "karma".²¹ The second way responsibility may be shifted is to extend the definition of "community" (i.e. reciprocating groups) to include *potential* members who "reciprocate" by reinforcing status distinctions *within* the members of the reciprocity system.

These two questions, entry into a communal body and the operation of reciprocity in situations of extreme uncertainty, are central to an examination of information exchange in a job search situation. In the first instance, the state of "unemployment" has, for most of this century, been defined as being external to the "communal group" specifically through the fault of the individual (cf Whyte, 1956).

While there have been many changes to the "at fault" designation of being unemployed (cf Tyrrell, 1994), a person who is unemployed is still viewed as being outside of the community. This point has been mentioned repeatedly in various job search seminars, and by many informants. It was also dramatized in the NFB (1982) film *After the Axe*.

In general, a person's belief that their pre-firing friends and peers (communal group) will be able to find them a job is seen as a major impediment to their ability to start a job search. The reason for this belief acting as an impediment is that the individual still acts as if they were part of the communal group, but they are no longer seen as being part of that communal group. Their actions and personally assumed status are at variance with their communally defined status. The individual must either unlearn those behavioural patterns that define them to others as members of a specific community, or

²⁰ According to Polanyi (1957:250-253), reciprocity requires the existence of two or more symmetrically organized groupings of people who enter into an exchange relationship. All of these grass roots organizations created a *de jure* symmetrical relationship between the members of the organization proper (the employees) and their "clients".

²¹ In such instances, the symmetrical groupings are viewed as being created by some transcendent force. Examples of various ideologies surrounding this form of reciprocity would include the Islamic injunction to give alms and the Christian concept of tithing. This might be one of the ways in which a shift from reciprocity systems to redistribution systems is accomplished. For more on this shift, see Wachtel (1981).

they must change their status with that community. Both options are considered in most seminars and manuals about job search techniques.²²

The question of reciprocity in a situation of extreme uncertainty, such as today's job market, is answered two ways. First, there is a recognition of communal status (see above) in the case of information referrals. Second, there is an appeal to chance modified by hard work - the invocation of a transcendent factor. In my fieldwork, I have come across a number of stories that illustrate this point, and one of them is worth including here.²³

A man who had been the Chief Financial Officer of a large company was let go in a downsizing. After a number of weeks, he finally told his wife that he had been let go, and they negotiated an agreement whereby she would help him in his job search. So, every morning, at the breakfast table, she would ask him what he planned on doing today.

One day, as he was responding to his wife's question, his 8 year old daughter turned to him and said, "Oh, Daddy, you have a meeting with Mr X at 4:30 this Friday." Her father looked at her and said "What?".

She replied, "Well, Daddy, you said that we all had to help you with finding a job, so I asked my friend if her daddy could give you a job, since he is a president of a company, and she said she would ask him. And she told me to tell you that he said you could meet with him on Friday at 4:30."

When he showed up at Mr X's office on Friday, he was incredibly embarrassed and said "I really appreciate your agreeing to meet with me, but we both know that our daughters embarrassed us into this, so I'll leave if you want." Mr X told him that he had already booked off half an hour so they might as well have their meeting.

Well, the meeting lasted for over two hours, and it turned out that they had a lot of friends in common, even though they had never met. But there wasn't any job opportunity.

²² The first option is usually covered under sections entitled "Networking", "Interviewing", and "How To Find Opportunities". The second option is usually presented as "How to become an independent consultant".

²³ This story was originally related to me by the manager of *KPMG* Career counselling in Ottawa in the summer of 1993. Since then, I have heard approximately twenty variants of it.

Two months later, the ex-CFO was contacted by an executive search firm who asked him if he was still looking for work. When he said yes, they asked for his resume. The week after, he was called in for an interview. The week after that, he was offered the job (another CFO position).

When he asked the search firm how they got his name, they were told that the president of the company that had hired him had recommended him. This was something of a surprise since he had never met the president before the interview.

So, on his first day of work, when the president was showing him around the office, he asked him how he had know that he was available. The president told him that he had been playing golf a month before with an old friend and telling him about his problems in finding a new CFO, and that his friend had mentioned that he might be available. The friend was Mr X.

The moral behind this story that is hammered home every time the story is told is that you will never know exactly how you will get a job opportunity, only that you must a) continue the search, and b) act in a manner appropriate to your status and that of the people you are in contact with.

3.2 Status/Structural Obligations

Many of the sources that Mauss examined argued that status maintenance and enhancement was the key component in reciprocity systems. And, there is certainly little doubt that the execution of obligations is an inherent component of status enhancement and maintenance. However, as I mentioned above, the fear of personal danger is also a key component in meeting obligations. These two combined, the desire to maintain or enhance status and the fear of personal danger, are the positive and negative conditioning elements of the psycho-cultural complex identified by Mauss. What Mauss missed, however, was the embedded nature of that status within specific organizations or "communities" which serve to structure the reciprocity (e.g. kinship networks, either real or fictive; collegial bodies, etc.).

There is one further positive conditioning element that is tied in with status, and that is a form of power. This form of power is not power in the sense of "control", but rather it is power in the sense of the ability to shape and influence a dynamic process. The story quoted above shows this type of power in operation, especially in the role played by Mr X.

In the case illustrated by this story, the obligation to reciprocate is also diffuse in that the "hero" of the story cannot repay either his daughter or Mr X, but he can and must repay individuals who ask him for help.²⁴ If he does not fulfil this obligation, then he will lose status in the eyes of his daughter, Mr X, and his current boss, which could easily lead to his being let go again. In effect, he would be denying the obligations that he has assumed by entering into this reciprocity system and, at the same time, denying the status of those who helped him to enter.

The story quoted above also illustrates another point which has been mentioned by informants: the obligation to reciprocate is based on classes of objects. For example, the "object" of reciprocation that is most commonly mentioned in cases of referral is a "Thank You" letter. In effect, this letter is a formal recognition of both the status of the individuals and of the existence of an obligation. Another, non-job search, example of this is the process of mentoring in most institutions. There is little or no expectation that the person being mentored will repay the mentor exactly, but there is an expectation that they will "live up to" the example of their mentors by mentoring others.

4.0 Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to examine the use of reciprocity in modern job searches and to develop a preliminary theoretical model that could account for the existence and operation of reciprocity systems in modern Canada. While the model I have proposed does explain and order a large amount of the data I have collected, there are still a number of areas that need further research and elaboration.

First, how can this model be expanded to include the other areas of potential jobs that are not included (e.g. franchising, self-employment, etc.)? Second, does this model apply to the process whereby organizations search for people and, if so, how? Third, what are the elements and effects of motivation in the entire job search process and how are these connected with the reciprocity systems considered? Finally, what specific reciprocity systems are used in a job search, and how are these systems connected into the general social system.

While the questions that remain unanswered are important, I believe that the approach used in this paper provides a useful framework for further elaboration that examines the substance of the job search process.

²⁴ This does not mean that he must give them jobs, just that he must help to circulate information about them to those who might need them.

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