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Career Center Director Co-Authors Article on Teacher Interviews

May 18, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.- Warren Kistner, director of the Career Center at Illinois Wesleyan University, has co-authored an article published in the May 2005 issue of the educational journal *Principal Leadership*.

The article, "A Question of Experience," was co-authored with Dr. Mary Clement, associate professor of teacher education at Berry College in Mt. Berry, Ga., and Wes Moran, director of the Career Development Center at Berry College.

They explored the use of behavior-based interviewing in teacher selection, based on research involving school administrators. They found that behavior-based interviewing, pioneered in the business world, has experienced increasing use in education.

"The whole premise behind behavior-based interviewing is that past performance is a predictor of what you might do in the future," Kistner said. "You'll get a better read on a candidate if they have to share examples of how they handled a similar situation to the one in your question.

"Behavior-based interviewing requires that candidates use an example from previous work or life experience that lets the interviewer know how they did handle (specific issues)," which is seen as more valuable than indicating how they might handle a hypothetical situation.

Behavior-based interviewing may supplement traditional questions about a person's motivation or strengths, and may replace more open-ended questions about a person's general experience with requests for examples addressing specific concerns such as classroom management or grading systems.

"If a school district is not using (behavior-based interviewing) currently, they probably should take a look at whether it would help in the selection of candidates," Kistner said.

Kistner is a 1983 graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University and earned a master's degree in counselor education from Illinois State University. He has been director of the Career Center since 1994.