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Research Reveals Most Americans Have Administrative Job Experience, But Assistant to Oprah Is Most Desired Position

MILWAUKEE, April 26, 2005 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Although Oprah Winfrey denies any political aspirations, a recent poll places her ahead of President George W. Bush in one contest. The talk show diva and the President finished first and second respectively in a survey that asked respondents who they would most want to work for if they could be an assistant to a celebrity for a day.

That is just one of the findings of the survey, conducted by Manpower as a way of celebrating the importance of administrative assistants during Administrative Professionals Week(R), which runs from April 24 - 30. Other results of the online omnibus survey of 2,000 adults conducted by Harris Interactive for Manpower include:

- Most Americans have an administrative role at some point in their career. In fact, 56 percent of survey takers have been employed in a position that entailed administrative responsibilities like word processing, data entry, spreadsheet management, filing, switchboard or receptionist duties.
- Women (66 percent) are more likely than men (45 percent) to have an administrative background.
- 28 percent of survey participants want to be Oprah Winfrey's assistant for a day, while a position with President George W. Bush placed a close second, earning the vote from 24 percent of respondents.
- Not surprisingly, Oprah was the clear favorite for women. Among females surveyed, 41 percent would accept an offer to spend a day as her assistant.
- Among male respondents, 33 percent pulled the lever for the President and would choose to be part of his administrative detail for the day.
- Other celebrities that could easily find a willing assistant include Donald Trump (7%), Brad Pitt (6%), Tiger Woods (5%), Jennifer Lopez (5%) and Teri Hatcher (4%).

"As the survey results show, most people have a clerical stint on their resumes," said Melanie Holmes, who began her career as a temporary administrative employee at Manpower and today is a senior vice president for the company.

Although there are considerably fewer administrative jobs than there were 30 years ago, the profession continues to offer a wealth of employment opportunities. "Administrative professionals often find that as their skills and knowledge grow, they are tapped to fill other positions within their organization. Promotions mean new opportunities for job seekers looking for an administrative position," said Holmes.

That is not to say that an administrative role is just a gateway job. Employers are discerning and particular about their needs when it comes to administrative professionals. "Manpower has specialized in administrative placements since the company's inception, so we've been tracking these skill trends for more than 50 years. Today, customers seeking administrative staff often request skill sets such as desk top publishing, project management and specific software proficiencies as well as certifications or college degree requirements," said Holmes. "Keeping up means regular training to stay on top of technology and trends."

Salaries reflect the growing expectations that employers have for administrative staff. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual income for administrative professionals was \$33,410 in 2002, with the highest 10 percent earning upwards of \$50,000. "Those who remain in the administrative field earn family-sustaining incomes," said Holmes. "It is a very viable career choice."

Whether it's working for Oprah Winfrey, a major corporation or a locally owned small business, the administrative profession offers variety, opportunity and challenge.

About Manpower

Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) is a world leader in the employment services industry, offering customers a continuum of services to meet their needs throughout the employment and business cycle. The company specializes in permanent, temporary and contract recruitment; employee assessment; training; career transition; organizational consulting; and professional financial services. Manpower's worldwide network of 4,300 offices in 67 countries and territories enables the company to meet the needs of its 400,000 customers per year, including small and medium size enterprises in all industry sectors, as well as the world's largest multinational corporations. The focus of Manpower's work is on raising productivity through improved quality, efficiency and cost-reduction, enabling customers to concentrate on their core business activities. In addition to the Manpower brand, the company operates under the brand names of Right Management Consultants, Jefferson Wells, Elan and Brook Street. More information on Manpower Inc. is available at <http://www.manpower.com> .

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