

= Search Committee =

" Search Committee " is the hour @-@ long finale of the seventh season of the American television comedy series The Office . It comprises the 151st and 152nd episodes of the series overall and the 25th and 26th episodes of the seventh season . It originally aired on NBC on May 19 , 2011 in the United States . In the episode , Deangelo 's new replacement is sought out through a search committee process led by Jim (John Krasinski) . Meanwhile , Angela becomes engaged to her state senator boyfriend , Robert (Jack Coleman) , while the rest of the office believes he is gay .

The episode was written by show runner and executive producer Paul Lieberstein and was directed by Jeffrey Blitz . The episode featured several guest appearances including one from The Office co @-@ creator Ricky Gervais , his second appearance on the series . The episode also marks the first appearance of James Spader and Catherine Tate , the former of whom was a series regular in the eighth season while the latter had a recurring appearance in the eighth season and was a series regular in the ninth and final season .

" Search Committee " received mixed reviews from critics with multiple critics commenting on the multiple guest stars . According to Nielsen Media Research , " Search Committee " was viewed by an estimated 7 @.@ 29 million viewers and earned a 3 @.@ 9 rating / 10 % share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , marking a rise in the ratings from the previous episode and the previous season finale .

= = Synopsis = =

With Deangelo Vickers still in a coma , Dunder Mifflin ? Sabre Scranton is left with Creed (Creed Bratton) as interim regional manager . Jo Bennett (Kathy Bates) puts Jim (John Krasinski) , Toby (Paul Lieberstein) and Gabe (Zach Woods) into a committee to interview candidates for the manager position , including Andy (Ed Helms) , Darryl (Craig Robinson) and a number of outsiders , including a personal friend of hers , Nellie Bertram (Catherine Tate) , who suggests various strange methods for running an office , including a " zen garden " theme and removal of all official titles for Dunder Mifflin Scranton . Pam (Jenna Fischer) takes it upon herself to protect the office and their clients from Creed 's haphazard and potentially catastrophic managerial style (he keeps trying to call major clients and tell them the office is about to go out of business) by distracting him with activities and posing as various clients when Creed has Jordan (Cody Horn) contact them .

Dwight (Rainn Wilson) , still upset over being demoted by Jo , stops taking care of himself and openly looks through want ads in the office . His attitude changes when he speaks with applicant Robert California (James Spader) , who disparages the position and the office . Merv ruins his interview , and Dwight becomes incensed that the position might go to someone who doesn 't take it seriously . He demands to be interviewed , and while Jim balks , after Dwight 's persistent efforts to acquire an interview , Jo instructs Jim to grant him one , as she likes " a little bit of crazy . " Jim had earlier firmly shot down Dwight 's extensive bribe list for Jim 's support , and quickly ends his formal interview .

Darryl thinks his popularity with the staff will make him a shoo @-@ in , so he thinks he doesn 't have to do an interview like everyone else . He is caught off @-@ guard when he actually must do an interview and they ask for his resume . Darryl writes up an overly extensive four @-@ page resume , which Jo quickly derides , though Jim encourages Darryl by saying that the interview and resume are mere formalities for him . When Andy interviews for the manager position , Gabe hijacks the meeting in an attempt to sabotage him by asking random trivia questions , which Andy successfully parries , but Gabe ends up screaming at him and acting like a lunatic . Gabe is also dismissive of Kelly (Mindy Kaling) during her interview , saying she 's not a " real candidate " . Kelly exacts revenge by telling Jo about Gabe 's relationship with Erin (Ellie Kemper) and his harassing behavior after their breakup . In response , Jo sends Gabe back to Sabre 's Florida headquarters , and installs Kelly in Gabe 's position on the search committee . Kelly then says she has accepted Dwight 's bribery and looks forward to the benefits of his return to the manager 's chair , as Toby

haltingly says they could give Dwight another trial run and Jim looks on in horror . After Phyllis tells Jim that Kelly and Dwight have pre @-@ fired her , Jim tells Dwight he is not and will not be the manager , and the office begins arguing about who will be selected . When the discussion gets out of control , with Ryan (B.J. Novak) preferring a homeless man , Andy declaring he wants the job , and Darryl 's daughter Jada asking out loud if Jim is the guy making him manager , Jim cuts it short and brings the committee back to the conference room to make up their minds .

Phyllis (Phyllis Smith) and Erin await the results of a DNA test to see if Erin is the daughter previously given up by Phyllis in high school . The results are negative , but Phyllis holds off on telling Erin after Andy rejects Erin 's proposal to start dating again , and continues to show maternal affection toward her .

Meanwhile , Angela (Angela Kinsey) becomes engaged to her state senator boyfriend , Robert . Oscar (Oscar Nunez) , who strongly believes that Robert is gay , shares his feelings with Pam . Ryan overhears them and confirms that Robert is gay , in his opinion . When the rest of the office thinks so as well , they must decide whether or not to tell Angela . They eventually decide not to tell Angela for a wide range of reasons ? not everyone is sure Robert is gay , Oscar is looking forward to the elegant wedding , and Pam doesn 't think it 's anyone 's right to blurt out that information . Angela is then typically rude about her nuptial plans ? first sing @-@ singing to an indifferent Stanley that they might not have room to invite him to the wedding , and then asking Pam if she can borrow the plans for the dream wedding Pam never got to have , before mocking the ceremony where Pam and Jim got married at Niagara Falls . Pam is sorely tempted to spill the beans about Robert 's sexuality , but ends up smiling sweetly and wishing Angela " a very happy wedding " .

= = Production = =

" Search Committee " was written by show runner and executive producer Paul Lieberstein , who also plays Toby Flenderson on the show , his 14th writing credit of the series . The episode was directed by Jeffrey Blitz , the ninth episode he has directed for the series . The episode features special guest appearances from Ricky Gervais (as his character David Brent from the original British version of The Office) , Catherine Tate , Will Arnett , Ray Romano , James Spader , Jim Carrey , Cody Horn and Warren Buffett . Gervais previously appeared in the episode " The Seminar " , and co @-@ wrote the episodes " Pilot " and " The Convict " ; he also serves as an executive producer for the series . In addition to appearing in " Search Committee " , Gervais contributed to the episode script . Initially the guest stars were planned to be a secret , before all were revealed to the media . Lieberstein described the moments with the guest stars in the episode as " more than a montage . It 's a number of scenes . We fit it in . We stuff it in " .

The episode script was initially 75 pages long , 10 pages too long to stay within the episode 's time slot ; this led to several cuts , a common problem for episodes of the series according to writer , B.J. Novak . The script received several laughs from the cast and producers specifically for lines read by Creed Bratton and Kathy Bates . " Search Committee " was one of the first episodes not to feature former Office lead actor Steve Carell ; the feeling during filming was " weird " according to Lieberstein . Carell 's departure made it possible for more scenes with secondary characters , and also allowed for the " very long group scene " , described as " observational and conversational " by Novak . The episode features a storyline hinted in " Goodbye , Michael " in which it is hinted that Phyllis is Erin 's birth mother . The rumor was started during an interview with executive producer Greg Daniels with Entertainment Weekly in which he stated " A tiny mystery story ? which I 'm not sure anyone ? s going to catch and will come out a few episodes from now ? is being set up here " .

The episode also marks the third and final appearance of Cody Horn as Jordan Garfield , Deangelo 's executive assistant , and the first of three new roles since Carell 's departure . The role was originally said to be recurring at first with a chance of her becoming a series regular in the eighth season . She eventually did not return for the eighth season . Immediately after " Search Committee " first aired , NBC posted Andy , Dwight and Darryl 's resume on their official website and allowed fans to vote for who they believed should be the manager . Spader would later join the cast as CEO of Sabre in the eighth season while Tate is currently set to return in the second half of the eighth

season as romantic interest for Robert California . In the eighth season premiere , " The List " , Andy was revealed to be the new manager . Arnett was considered a high possibility to appear on the series , but could not due to his commitment to the NBC comedy series Up All Night . This also marks the eighth and final appearance of Kathy Bates as Jo Bennett , of whom later episodes in the eighth season would refer to Jo later stepping down from her position as Sabre CEO and hiring Robert California to replace her , and later dissolving the company entirely as chairman .

= = Cultural references = =

Darryl calls Microsoft and asks whether they still have Clippy , an unpopular feature from Microsoft Office . Phyllis mentions that many babies were born in 1982 due to the release of the comedy film Porky 's . Ryan insults Pam , saying that she would prefer Rachael Ray or the hosts of The View as the new manager . At one point in the episode , Angela says " It 's a little flashy . I mean , what am I , Naomi Judd ? " , a reference to the country music singer .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original American broadcast on May 19 , 2011 , " Search Committee " was viewed by an estimated 7 @. @ 29 million viewers and received a 3 @. @ 9 rating / 10 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 3 @. @ 9 % of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds , and 10 % of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This marked a rise in the ratings from the previous episode , " Dwight K. Schrute , (Acting) Manager , and a rise from the sixth season finale , " Whistleblower " . The episode became the highest rated scripted program on Thursday and ranked first in its timeslot , beating the season finales for Grey 's Anatomy , Bones and The Mentalist . " Search Committee " was the seventh most @- @ watched scripted show for the week of broadcast among adults aged 18 ? 49 .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode received generally mixed reviews from critics . Myles McNutt from review website A.V. Club gave the episode a B- , saying that it was " a funny episode that managed to be only fitfully satisfying . " IGN reviewer Cindy White commented that " it 's more apparent than ever that ' Goodbye , Michael ' should have ended the season , if not the series , " and that " the show is just spinning its wheels now " . Despite this , she praised the scenes featuring Creed Bratton and James Spader , believing Bratton 's performance consisted of " the funniest scenes of the episode " , and that Spader " was given the meatiest part , gamely channeling his dominating boss role from Secretary " . White ultimately gave the episode a 6 @. @ 5 / 10 , calling it " Okay " . TV Squad writer Joel Keller criticized the episode for not featuring a true plot , writing that " this felt like a series of sketches in search of a plot . " The Office co @- @ creator Ricky Gervais also commented on the outlandishness , particularly Warren Buffett 's appearance , saying " If you 're going to jump a shark , jump a big one . " He also compared the episode to the Chris Martin episode of Gervais 's other series , Extras . The shark quote was repeated multiple times on other media outlets ; Gervais eventually commented that " I fucking didn 't [diss The Office] , that 's for sure . "

Alan Sepinwall of HitFix referred to the episode as a " bumpy , awkward , great big mess of a finale " and a " very poorly @- @ executed sweeps stunt " . He also wrote that the guest stars " did not fit comfortably into the world of the show " . Entertainment Weekly writer Hillary Busis called the episode a " major cop out " and criticized the writers for having a whole year to figure out how to end the season , but instead waiting to announce the new manager in the fall . She ultimately concluded that " I don 't love some of the choices the show has made recently " and that " the show has just been spinning its wheels for the past several weeks " . Many critics expressed relief that Erin and

Phyllis were not mother and daughter . " Search Committee " was voted the fourth lowest @-@ rated episode out of 24 from the seventh season , according to an episode poll at the fansite OfficeTally ; the episode was rated 6 @.@ 93 out of 10 . In another poll , " Search Committee " was voted the thirteenth @-@ highest rated episode out of 24 from the seventh season , according to a " Survivor " poll by OfficeTally . Jim Carrey later received a nomination for " Favorite TV Guest Star " at the 38th People 's Choice Awards .