

Lesson: 15

Selecting HR

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We all want to avoid rejection, so why not familiarize ourselves with the process of Selection.

It involves predicting which candidates will make the most appropriate contribution to the organisation - now and in the future.

Selection is the process of gathering information about applicants for a position and then using that information to choose the most appropriate applicant.

Stone has provided a more formal definition of selection as follows:

"Selection is the process of differentiating between applicants in order to identify (and hire) those with a greater likelihood of success in a job".

Selection process assumes and rightly so, that there are more number of candidates available than the number of candidates actually selected. These candidates are made available through recruitment process.

Aims of the selection process

- Gather as much relevant information as possible
- Organise and evaluate the information
- Assess each candidate in order to:
 - Forecast performance on the job, and
 - Give information to applicants, so that
 - They can judge whether or not they wish to accept an offer of employment.

So now we can say that selection is about collecting evidence to enable you to make an accurate judgment about a candidate's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the job.

Types Of Selection Device

Managers can use a number of selection devices to reduce accept and reject errors. The best-known devices include an analysis of the applicant's completed application form, written and performance-simulation tests, interviews, background investigations, and in some cases, a physical examination. Let's briefly review each of devices. Following chart lists the strengths and weaknesses of each.

1. The Application Form

Strengths:

- Relevant biographical data and facts that can be verified have been shown to be valid performance measures for some jobs.
- When items on the form have been weighted to reflect job relatedness, this device has proved to be a valid predictor for diverse groups.

Weaknesses:

- Usually only a couple of items on the form prove to be valid predictors of job performance and then only for a specific job.
- Weighted-item applications are difficult and expensive to create and maintain.

2. Written Tests

Strengths:

- Tests of intellectual ability, spatial and mechanical ability, perceptual accuracy, and motor ability are moderately valid predictors for many semiskilled and unskilled lower-level jobs in industrial organizations.
- Intelligence tests are reasonably good predictors for supervisory positions.

Weaknesses:

- Intelligence and other tested characteristics can be somewhat removed from actual job performance, thus reducing their validity.

3. Performance-Simulation Tests

Strengths:

- Based on job analysis data and easily meet the requirement of job relatedness
- Have proven to be valid predictors of job performance.

Weaknesses:

- Expensive to create and administer.

4. *The Interview*

Strengths:

- Must be structured and well organized to be effective predictors.
- Interviewers must use common questioning to be effective predictors.

Weaknesses:

- Interviewers must be aware of legality of certain questions.
- Subject to potential biases, especially if interviews are not well structured and standardized.

5. *Background Investigations*

Strengths:

- . Verifications of background data are valuable sources of information.

Weaknesses:

- Reference checks are essentially worthless as a selection tool.

6. *Physical Examination*

Strengths:

- Has some validity for jobs with certain physical requirements.
- Done primarily for insurance purposes.

Weaknesses:

- Must be sure that physical requirements are job related and do not discriminate.

Selection Process

Let us all go through the process of selection that involves a number of steps. The basic idea is to collect maximum possible information about the candidates to ascertain their suitability for employment. Below is a discussion of the various steps:

1. Screening of Applications

Prospective employees have to fill up some sort of application form. These forms have a variety of information about the applicants like their bio-data, achievements, experience, etc.

2. Selection Tests

Many organizations hold different kinds of selection tests to know more about the candidates or to reject the candidates who cannot be called for interview, etc. Selection tests normally supplement the information provided in application forms. Such forms may contain factual information about candidates. Selection tests may give information about their aptitude, interest, personality etc, which cannot be known by application forms.

Types of Test

- I. ***Achievement Test*** It is also called performance test or trade test. Achievement is concerned with what one has accomplished. When candidates claim that they have done certain things and know these, the achievement test may be conducted to measure how well the candidates know these. A candidate's knowledge may be measured through his answers to certain questions or his performance at a practical test. For example, a typing test may measure the typing performance of a typist in terms of speed, accuracy and efficiency. Performance test may be administered for selecting employees at operative level as well as junior management level
- II. ***Intelligence Test*** Intelligence test tries to measure the level of intelligence of a candidate. This test generally includes verbal comprehension, word fluency, memory, inductive, reasoning, number facility, speed of perception, spatial, visualization, etc. The scores on the test are usually expressed numerically as Intelligence Quotient (IQ), which can be calculated as follows

$$IQ = \frac{\text{Mental age} \times 100}{\text{Actual age}}$$

It means that the IQ is derived by converting actual age into mental age and

multiplying it by 100 in order to facilitate comparison. Higher is the figure; higher is the level of intelligence. Intelligence test is designed on the basis of age groups. Thus, each age group may have different intelligence tests. The basic idea behind intelligence test is that if the organization is able to get people with higher intelligence, its training and learning process will be easier because intelligent employees learn faster than dull employees.

- III. **Personality Test.** The personality test is administered to predict performance success for jobs that require dealing with people, or jobs that are essentially supervisory or managerial in character. Dimensions of personality such as interpersonal competence, dominance-submission, extroversion-introversion, self-confidence, leadership ability, patience, and ambition can be measured through personality tests. Personality test is essentially a projective test because it projects the personality of the individual who may be employed by the organization. Among the most widely used personality test is Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) and its more improved version Thematic Evaluation of Management Potential (TEMP).
- IV. **Aptitude test** is used for measuring human performance characteristics related to the possible development of proficiency on specific jobs. These basic characteristics can be thought of as aptitudes. As such, aptitude test measures the latent or potential characteristics to do something provided proper environment and training are provided to the individuals. This test is more valid when the applicants have no experience or very little experience along the lines of the jobs. Specific tests have been developed for jobs that require clerical, mechanical, spatial relationships, and manual dexterity, abilities and skills. However, aptitude test does not measure motivation. Since on-the-job motivation is found to be more important than aptitude for the job, aptitude test is supplemented by interest tests.
- V. **Interest Test** Interest test is designed to discover a person's area of interest, and to identify the kind of jobs that will satisfy him. It is assumed that a person who is interested in a job can do much better than the person who is not interested. Interest test generally measures interest in outdoor activities, mechanical, computational, scientific, persuasive, artistic, literary, musical, clerical, social services, etc.

The above discussion shows that different tests are used for different purposes. Each of them has the usefulness and limitations in specified areas. Therefore, a combination of tests should be used for selection purpose. Moreover, these tests should be related with the nature of posts to be filled up.

Advantages of Selection Tests

Various steps of selection process including selection tests are meant to solicit information about the candidates so as to arrive at a decision to select the most

desirable candidates out of the several available. Since only some information is available from other sources like application forms, references, etc., selection tests are used to solicit more information about the candidates. Therefore, the use of selection tests has many advantages:

1. Selection tests are standardized and unbiased methods of soliciting information about the prospective employees. Thus, a person who does not get selected on the basis of selection tests cannot argue for the partiality in selection process. It is to be noted that in many organizations, impartiality in selection process is of prime importance like public sector organizations.
2. Selection tests can be used to weed out the large number of candidates who may not be considered for employment in the organization. Normally, organizations receive applications from large number of candidates seeking jobs in the organization. They all meet the basic requirements of the jobs, but all cannot be called for interview because it is a very time-consuming process. Selection tests will provide the cut-off point above which candidates can be called for interview. Thus, the tests will save lot of time and money.
3. The tests are able to uncover the qualities and potentials of prospective employees, which cannot be known by other methods including personal interview. Since the people are taken in the organization not only for the present jobs but they are promoted over the period of time, tests provide good opportunities to test their potentials for such promotions also. Thus, tests are more reliable source for predicting the overall suitability of candidates for the employment.

Limitations of Selection Tests

Selection tests may provide useful information but they suffer from some limitations also. Two such limitations are quite important which suggest that use of tests should be supplemented by other means of soliciting information about the candidates:

1. Selection test cannot make a 100% prediction of an individual's on the job success. At best, they just reveal about those who have scored above cut-off points and those who have scored below cut-off points. Hence it is desirable to use test as only as supplementary method of selection.
2. If the number of candidate is small the use of test is not economical. In such a case it is desirable to select persons on the basis of interview only.

3. Interviews

Selection tests are normally followed by personal interview of the candidates. The basic idea is to find out overall suitability of candidates for the jobs. It also provides opportunity to give relevant information about the organization to the candidates. In many cases, interview of preliminary nature can be conducted before the selection tests.

Role of Interview:

We must try and understand that interviews are so essential in the selection process that many times, selection of the candidates is made on the basis of interview alone. If handled properly, interview contributes in, the following, ways:

1. It is the only method of direct contact between the candidates and the employer in which the employer can see a candidate in action-how he looks, his manner, his wearing, his appearance, etc., method of interaction and answering, etc.
2. Many of the information can be sought through the interview, which may not be available in application form, or cannot be disclosed by the selection tests, such as: family background, future plans; etc.
3. The 'interview can be used as a tool for giving information about the organization, its policies, nature of the work to be performed by the candidate salary and other benefits to be offered. Negotiations, if any, about the salary and- perks to be offered to the candidate can also be undertaken.

Hence we should remember that interview can be used 'as a method to promote goodwill among the candidates by offering courtesy, by providing vocational literature, by constructive suggestions, and by showing interest in them.

4. Checking Of References

Many organizations ask the candidates to provide the names of referees from whom more information about the candidates can be solicited. Such information may be related to character, working, etc. The usual referees may be previous, employers, persons associated with the educational institutions from where the candidates have received education, or other persons of prominence who may be aware of the candidates' behaviour and ability. In our country, references are not given adequate importance because of their biasness but these can give very useful information, which may not be available otherwise.

5. Physical Examination

Physical examination is carried out to ascertain the physical standards and fitness of prospective employees. The practice of physical examination varies a great

deal both in terms of coverage and timing. While many organizations do not carry physical examinations at all, others carry on a very comprehensive basis. Some organizations only have general check up of applicants to find the major physical problems, which, may come in the way of effective discharge of duties. In the context of timing also, some organizations locate the physical examination near the end of the selection process, others place it relatively early in the process. This latter course is generally followed when there is high demand for physical fitness.

6. Approval by Appropriate Authority

On the basis of the above steps, suitable candidates are recommended for selection by the selection committee or personnel department. Though such a committee or personnel department may have authority to select the candidates finally, often it has staff authority to recommend the candidates for selection to the appropriate authority. Organizations may designate the various authorities for approval of final selection of candidates for different categories of candidates. Thus, for top-level managers, Board of Directors may be approving authority; for lower levels, even functional heads concerned may be approving authority. In university, it may be syndicate/executive committee. When the approvals received, the candidate are informed about their selection and asked to report for duty to specified persons.

7. Placement.

After all the formalities are completed, the candidates are placed on their jobs initially on probation basis. The probation period may range from three months to two years. During this period, they are observed keenly, and when they complete this period successfully, they become the permanent employees of the organization. After a candidate is selected for employment, he is placed on the job. Initially, the placement may be on probation, the period of which may range from six months to two years.

After selecting a candidate, he should be placed on a suitable job. Placement is the actual posting of an employee to a specific job. It involves assigning a specific rank and responsibility to an employee. The line manager takes the placement decisions after matching the requirements of a job with the qualification of a candidate. Most organizations put new recruits on probation for a given period of time, after which their services are confirmed. During this period, the performance of the probationer is closely monitored. If the new recruit fails to adjust himself to the job and turns out poor performance, the organization may consider his name for placement elsewhere. Such second placement is called 'differential placement. Usually the employees' supervisor, in consultation with the higher levels of line management, takes decisions regarding the future placement of each employee. Placement is an important human resource activity. If neglected, it may create employee adjustment problems leading to absenteeism,

turnover, accidents, poor performance, etc. The employee will also suffer seriously. He may quit the organization in frustration, complaining bitterly about everything. Proper placement is, therefore, important to both the employee and the organization. The benefits of placements may be summarized thus,

Major Benefits of Proper Placement

The employee is able to:

Show good results on the job.

Get along with people easily.

Keep his spirits high, report for duty regularly.

Avoid mistakes and accidents.

Dear friends, let us go through the following articles for better understanding of the topic.

Article - 1

Manpower Introduces Web-Based Employment Prescreening Tool

July 16 2003 - Manpower has added NetSelect(SM), a Web-based employment-prescreening tool, to its range of North American human resources services. The company considers that NetSelect is able to efficiently prescreen thousands of job candidates, thereby significantly reducing the amount of time hiring managers need to spend reviewing resumes and identifying the most suitable candidates.

"Manpower designed NetSelect in response to customer demand for new technology that facilitates faster hiring while improving quality," said Barbara J. Beck, executive vice president of U.S. & Canadian operations for Manpower Inc. "This tool strengthens Manpower's lineup of staffing and HR services, creating added convenience for customers seeking a single partner who can bring a range of services to the table."

NetSelect's web-based prescreening ability is achieved by means of an online questionnaire. A customized questionnaire is developed by Manpower in consultation with the hiring client. This determines if candidates possess the desired prerequisites for a position. When

candidates express an interest in that open position, they are directed to the questionnaire that is posted at a unique Web address. Employers can establish a link within an online job posting leading directly to the custom-built questionnaire. NetSelect is completely Web-enabled - it requires no downloads, network configuration or IT integration.

Candidates can access the questionnaire when it suits - it is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When a candidate has completed the questionnaire, NetSelect assigns a score based on how closely that person's background and preferences match the job profile. NetSelect then organizes the results in a database. This allows employers to:

- See at a glance how many people completed the questionnaire;
- view their scores;
- determine who will move on to the next step in the hiring process.

Additionally, hirers can send e-mail messages to applicants directly through NetSelect, which keeps a record of correspondence.

"NetSelect brings unprecedented efficiency to the hiring process, and employers will appreciate the impact this tool has on the bottom line," said Mark Gambill, vice president of marketing for Manpower North America.

Manpower considers that employers will save time and money because only candidates with the highest scores proceed to the more time- and cost-intensive screening procedures.

Article - 2

Why should I hire you?

September 24 2003 - It's a standard interview question, but the answers employers receive can be far from ordinary. The Creative Group, a specialized staffing service providing marketing, advertising, creative and web professionals on a project basis, recently asked 250 advertising and marketing executives to describe the strangest responses candidates have given when asked why they should be hired.

Those surveyed were asked, "What is the most unusual or creative reason you have ever heard a candidate give for why he or she should be hired?" Here are some of their responses:

- "The candidate said he could be an asset to our company softball team."

- "The applicant said she was bored watching TV at home."

- "The job seeker pointed out that he had a great smile."

"When discussing why they should be hired, applicants should focus on their strengths most relevant to the position and how those qualifications ultimately will benefit the company," said Tracey Turner, executive director of The Creative Group.

Employers are less likely to be interested in the following points made by job seekers:

- "The candidate noted that there were no redheads in the company and said we should hire one."

- "The job seeker said we should hire him because he just won big at the casino and was on a roll."

- "One person said we should hire her because she was a cheerleader in high school."

- "An applicant explained that his brother-in-law was successful in the industry, so he would be, too."

- "Someone said she was a good reader at church, and that's why she ought to be hired."

Candidates should be sure to focus on the potential employer's needs, not their own, during the interview. These next applicants might have benefited from this advice:

- "One person said I should hire him because he was tired of living with his parents."

- "The applicant said he'd been rejected by all the good agencies."

- "A guy said he was the sole source of support for his puppy."

Threats rarely inspire a job offer. To wit:

- "The candidate said that unless we hired him, our corporate identity would disappear."

- "One person said she wouldn't stop calling us until she was hired."

- "The applicant said our company wouldn't survive without him."

While job seekers should show enthusiasm about the position, excitement about the company locale may not go over well, as these next examples show:

- "He said we should hire him so he could ride his bike to work."
- "The candidate said she'd always wanted to work in our building."
- "The applicant said we should hire her because she lived close by."

"With numerous qualified professionals competing for jobs, a candidate's power of persuasion plays a greater role in his or her success," said Turner. "Applicants need to really sell themselves during the interview, emphasizing specific expertise and highlighting career achievements."

Turner offered the following tips to help candidates showcase their strengths during the interview process:

- Curtail clichés. Avoid overused terms or phrases such as "hardworking" and "results-oriented." Instead, focus on your unique qualifications.
- Get specific. Provide examples that highlight your positive attributes. For instance, if you're able to meet tight deadlines, tell a brief story that demonstrates this quality. The more memorable the anecdote, the better.
- Focus on achievements. Instead of simply describing your responsibilities in previous roles, try to quantify your accomplishments, such as bringing in 15 new clients in one year.
- Do your homework. Research the firm thoroughly so you can discuss how your expertise relates to the particular position and company.

Wendy Gillis, Toronto division director for The Creative Group, said, "Asking intelligent questions during the interview and following up with a compelling thank-you note that reiterates key strengths and qualifications can help applicants stand out from the competition."

The survey was developed by The Creative Group and conducted by an independent research firm. It includes 250 responses - 125 from

advertising executives and 125 from senior marketing executives. The Creative Group has offices in major markets across the United States and in Canada and offers online job search services at.

Selecting HR

Definition

"Selection is the process of differentiating between applicants in order to identify (and hire) those with a greater likelihood of success in a job".

A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a brown cover and a light beige page. The spiral binding is on the left side. The title 'Selection Process' is centered at the top of the page, underlined. Below the title is a bulleted list of seven items.

Selection Process

- Screening of Applications
- Selection Tests
- Interviews
- Checking of References
- Physical Examination
- Approval by Appropriate Authority
- Placement