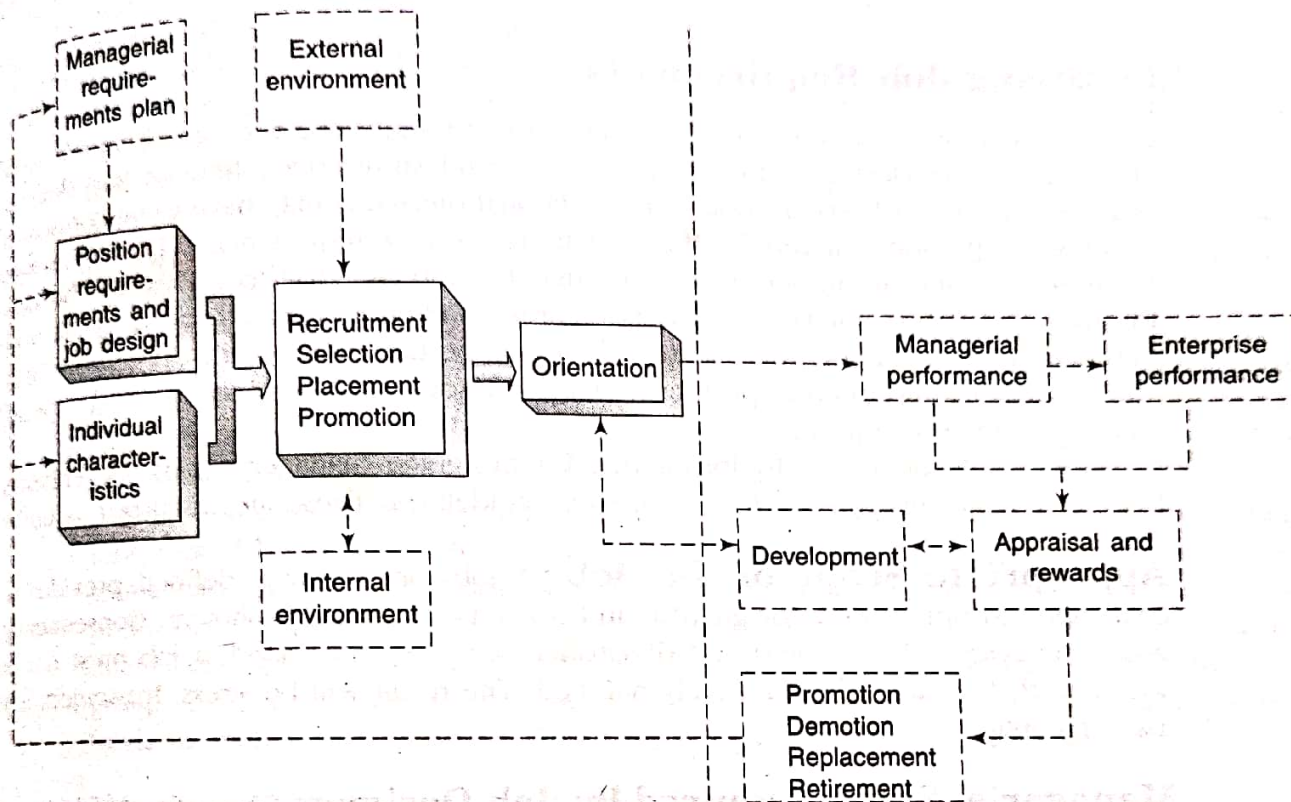


Figure 11.4**Systems Approach to Selection**

Variables marked with broken lines are staffing and other activities that are discussed in other chapters.



(for example, company policies, supply of and demand for managers, and the organizational climate) and the external environment (laws, regulations, availability of managers). After people have been selected and placed in positions, they must be introduced to the new job. This orientation involves learning about the company, its operation, and its social aspects.

The newly placed managers then carry out their managerial and nonmanagerial functions (such as marketing), resulting in managerial performance, which eventually determines enterprise performance. Subsequently, managerial performance is appraised, and managers are rewarded (see Chapter 12). On the basis of this evaluation, manager and organization development is initiated (Chapter 13). Finally, appraisal may also become the basis for promotion, demotion, replacement, and retirement decisions. That is the selection model in brief; now each major variable in the model will receive closer attention.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS AND JOB DESIGN

Selecting a manager effectively requires a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of the position which is to be filled. An objective analysis of position requirements

must be made, and, as far as possible, the job must be designed to meet the organizational and individual needs. In addition, positions must be evaluated and compared so that the incumbents can be treated equitably. Among other factors to consider are the required skills—technical, human, conceptual, and design—since these vary with the level in the organizational hierarchy and the personal characteristics needed by managers. (See Chapter 1.8)

Identifying Job Requirements

In identifying job requirements, firms must answer questions such as: What has to be done in this job? How is it done? What background knowledge, attitudes, and skills are required? Since positions are not static, additional questions may have to be considered: Can the job be done differently? If so, what are the new requirements? Finding answers to these and similar questions requires that the job be analysed. This can be done through observation, interviews, questionnaires, or even a systems analysis. Thus, a job description, based on job analysis, usually lists important duties, authority-responsibility, and the relationship to other positions. Many firms also include objectives and expected results in job descriptions.

There is, of course, no foolproof rule for designing managerial jobs. Nevertheless, firms can avoid mistakes by following some guidelines. These are discussed as under:

Appropriate Scope of the Job A job too narrowly defined provides no challenge, no opportunity for growth, and no sense of accomplishment. Consequently, good managers will be bored and dissatisfied. On the other hand, a job must not be so broad that it cannot be effectively handled. The result will be stress, frustration, and loss of control.

Managerial Skills Required by Job Designs Generally, the design of the job should start with the tasks to be accomplished. The design is usually broad enough to accommodate people's needs and desires. But some writers on management suggest that it may be necessary to design the job to fit the leadership style of a particular person. It may be especially appropriate to design jobs for exceptional persons, in order to utilize their potential. The problem, of course, is that such a position would probably have to be restructured every time a new manager occupied it. The job description, then, must provide a clear idea of the performance requirements for a person in a particular position but must also allow some flexibility so that the employer can take advantage of individual characteristics and abilities.

Any position description is contingent on the particular job and the organization. For example, in a bureaucratic and fairly stable organization environment, a position may be described in relatively specific terms. In contrast, in a dynamic organization with an unstable, fast-changing environment, a job description may have to be more general and most likely will have to be reviewed more frequently. A situational approach to job descriptions and job designs is called for.

Job Design

People spend a great deal of time on the job, and it is therefore important to design

jobs so that individuals feel good about their work. This requires an appropriate job structure in terms of content, function, and relationships.

Design of Jobs for Individuals and Work Teams The focus of job design can be on the individual position or on work groups. First, individual jobs can be enriched by grouping tasks into natural work units. This means putting tasks, which are related, into one category and assigning an individual to carry out those tasks. A second related approach is to combine several tasks into one job. For example, rather than having the tasks of assembling a water pump carried out by several persons on the assembly line, workstations can be established with individuals doing the whole task of putting the unit together and even testing it. A third way of enriching the job is to establish direct relationships with the customer or client. A systems analyst may present findings and recommendations directly to the managers involved in the systems change rather than reporting to his or her superior, who would then make the recommendations to top management. Fourth, prompt and specific feedback should be built into the system whenever appropriate. In one retail store, for example, salespersons received the sales figures for each day and summary figures for each month. Fifth, individual jobs can be enriched through vertical job loading, which is increasing individuals' responsibility for planning, doing, and controlling their job.

Similar arguments can be made for improving the design of jobs for work teams. Jobs should be designed so that groups have a complete task to perform. Moreover, teams may be given authority and freedom to decide how well the jobs shall be performed; thus the groups are given a great deal of autonomy. Within the team, individuals can often be trained so that they can rotate to different jobs within the group. Finally, rewards may be administered on the basis of group performance, which tends to induce cooperation rather than competition among team members.

Factors Influencing Job Design In designing jobs, the requirements of the enterprise have to be taken into account. But other factors must be considered in order to realize maximum benefits; they include individual differences, the technology involved, the costs associated with restructuring the jobs, the organization structure, and the internal climate.

People have different needs. Those with unused capabilities and a need for growth and development usually want to have their job enriched and to assume a greater responsibility. While some people prefer to work by themselves, others with social needs usually work well in groups. The nature of the task and the technology related to the job must also be considered. While it may be possible for work teams to assemble automobiles, as it was done at a Volvo plant in Sweden, it may not be efficient to use the same work design for the high production runs at General Motors in the United States. The costs of changing to new job designs must also be considered. It makes a great deal of difference whether a plant is newly designed or an old plant has to be redesigned and changed to accommodate new job design concepts.

The organization structure must also be taken into account. Individual jobs must fit the overall structure. Autonomous work groups, for example, may work well in a decentralized organization, but they may be inappropriate in a centralized structure. Similarly, the organizational climate influences the job design. Groups may function well in an atmosphere that encourages participation, job enrichment, and autonomous

work, while they may not fit into an enterprise with an autocratic, top-down approach to managerial leadership.

SKILLS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS NEEDED BY MANAGERS

To be effective, managers need various skills ranging from technical to design. The relative importance of these skills varies according to the level in the organization, as discussed in Chapter 1. In addition, analytical and problem-solving abilities and certain personal characteristics are sought in managers.

Analytical and Problem-Solving Abilities

One of the frequently mentioned skills desired of managers is analytical and problem-solving ability. But as Alan Stoneman, former president of the Purex Corporation, used to say, "We have no problems here; all are opportunities; all a problem should be is an opportunity." In other words, managers must be able to identify problems, analyse complex situations, and, by solving the problems encountered, exploit the opportunities presented. They must scan the environment and identify, through a rational process, those factors that stand in the way of opportunities. Thus, analytical skills should be used to find needs of present customers—or potential ones—and then to satisfy those needs with a product or service. It has been amply demonstrated that this opportunity-seeking approach can mean corporate success. For example, Edwin H Land of Polaroid filled the needs of people who wanted instant photographs. But problem identification and analysis are not enough. Managers also need the will to implement the solutions; they must recognize the emotions, needs, and motivations of the people involved in initiating the required change as well as of those who resist change.

Personal Characteristics Needed by Managers

In addition to the various skills that effective managers need, several personal characteristics are also important. They are: a desire to manage, the ability to communicate with empathy, integrity and honesty, and the person's experience—his or her past performance as a manager—which is a very significant characteristic.

Desire to Manage The successful manager has a strong desire to manage, to influence others, and to get results through team efforts of subordinates. To be sure, many people want the privileges of managerial positions, which include high status and salary, but they lack the basic motivation to achieve results by creating an environment in which people work together towards common aims. The desire to manage requires effort, time, energy, and, usually, long hours of work.

Communication Skills and Empathy Another important characteristic of managers is the ability to communicate through written reports, letters, speeches, and discussions. Communication demands clarity, but even more, it demands **empathy**. This is the ability to understand the feelings of another person and to deal with the

emotional aspects of communication. Communication skills are important for an effective **intragroup communication**, that is, communication with people in the same organizational unit. As one moves up in the organization, however, **intergroup communication** becomes increasingly important. This is communication not only with other departments but also with groups outside the enterprise: customers, suppliers, governments, the community, and, of course, the stockholders in business enterprises.

Integrity and Honesty Managers must be morally sound and worthy of trust. Integrity in managers includes honesty in money matters and in dealing with others, effort to keep superiors informed, adherence to the full truth, strength of character, and behavior in accordance with ethical standards. Many of these qualities, and others, have been cited by top executives of major companies. For example, Henry Ford II, former chairperson of Ford Motor Company, mentioned as appealing, qualities of honesty, candor, and openness.

Past Performance as a Manager Another very important characteristic for selection is past performance as a manager. It is probably the most reliable forecast of a manager's future performance. Of course, an assessment of managerial experience is not possible in selecting first-line supervisors from the ranks, since they have not had such an experience. But past accomplishments are important considerations in the selection of middle- and upper-level managers.

MATCHING QUALIFICATIONS WITH POSITION REQUIREMENTS

After the organizational positions are identified, managers are obtained through recruitment, selection, placement, and promotion (see the variables in Figure 11.4.) There are basically two sources of managerial personnel: People from within the enterprise may be promoted or transferred, and managers may be hired from the outside. For **internal** promotions, a computerized information system may help to identify qualified candidates. It can be used in conjunction with a comprehensive human resource plan. Specifically, it can be utilized to anticipate staff requirements, new openings, attritions, development needs, and career planning.

There are also several **external** sources available, and the enterprise may use different methods in finding the qualified managers. Many employment agencies—public and private—and executive recruiters (sometimes called “headhunters”) locate suitable candidates for positions. Other sources for managers are professional associations, educational institutions, referrals from people within the enterprise, and, of course, unsolicited applications from persons interested in the firm.

Recruitment of Managers

Recruiting involves attracting candidates to fill positions in the organization structure. Before the recruiting process begins, the position's requirements—which should relate directly to the task—must be clearly identified. This makes it easier to recruit suitable

candidates from outside. Enterprises with a favorable public image find it easier to attract qualified candidates. A company such as GE (General Electric) has a well-recognized image, while small firms—which frequently offer excellent growth and development opportunities—may have to make great efforts to communicate to the applicant the kinds of products, services, and opportunities they offer.

Selection, Placement, and Promotion

Selecting a manager is choosing from among the candidates the one who best meets the position requirements. Since the selection may be for a specific job opening or for future managerial requirements, there are two approaches to filling the organizational positions. In the **selection approach**, applicants are sought to fill a position with rather specific requirements; in the **placement approach**, the strengths and weaknesses of the individual are evaluated, and a suitable position is found or even designed.

Promotion is a change within the organization to a higher position that has greater responsibilities and requires more advanced skills. It usually involves higher status and an increase in pay. The various facets of selection generally apply also to promotion, which may be a reward for outstanding performance or a result of the firm's desire to better utilize an individual's skills and abilities. Promotions may be a reward for past performance, but only if there is an evidence of potential competency. Otherwise, persons may be promoted to a level at which they are incompetent.

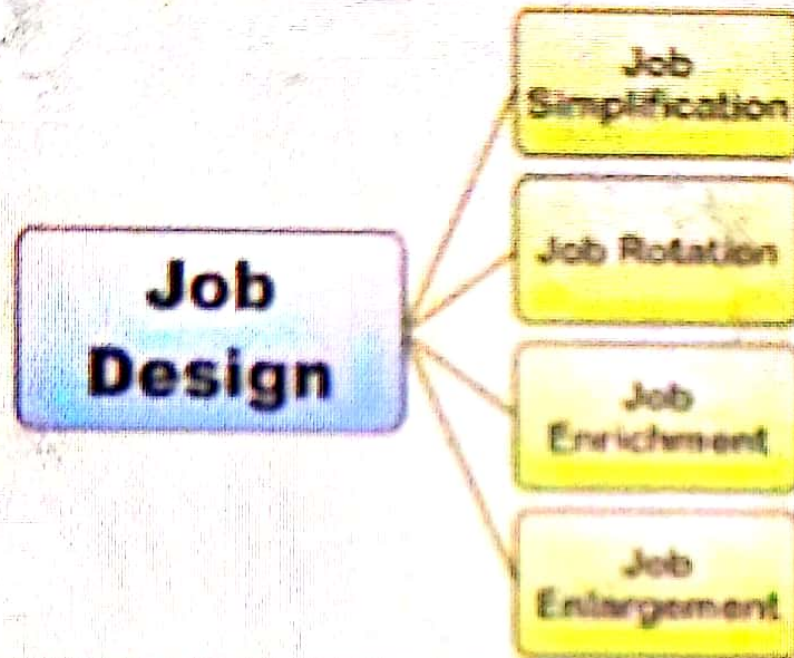
The Peter Principle

Errors in selection are possible, perhaps even common. According to Laurence J Peter and Raymond Hall, authors of **The Peter Principle**, managers tend to be promoted to the level of their incompetence.¹⁰ Specifically, if a manager succeeds in a position, this very success may lead to promotion to a higher position, often one requiring skills that the person does not possess. Such a promotion may involve work that is over the manager's head. While the possibility of individual growth must not be overlooked, the Peter Principle can serve as a warning not to take the selection and promotion process lightly.

SELECTION PROCESS, TECHNIQUES, AND INSTRUMENTS

This section presents an overview of the selection process, followed by a discussion of a number of instruments and techniques, including interviews, tests, and the assessment center. For good selection, the information about the applicant should be both valid and reliable. When people ask if the data is **valid**, they raise this question: Is the data measuring what it is supposed to be measuring? In selection, validity is the degree to which the data predict the candidate's success as a manager. The information should also have a high degree of **reliability**, a term that refers to the accuracy and consistency of the measurement. For example, a reliable test, if repeated under the same conditions, would give essentially the same results.

Job design



Job design is a core function of human resource management and it is related to the specification of contents, methods and relationship of jobs in order to satisfy technological and organizational requirements as well as the social and personal... [Wikipedia](#)