



## **A significant role in selection of applicants in an organization in UK: Case study: London School of Science & Technology(LSST)**

**By Authors**

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### **Abstract**

*Recruitment and selection process in an organization is important in order to attract an effective workforce. Even though tests and interviews may be suitable as screening tools for organizations, the candidates need to possess the essential knowledge, competencies and abilities. In implementing these functions, there are various factors that need to be taken into consideration. These include educational qualifications, competencies, aptitude, personality traits, experience, job requirements and so forth. The candidates are required to go through various rounds of interviews and in some cases, may even have to undertake other methods such as, written tests, group discussions etc. before, they are finally selected. When the candidates are selected, one of the important factors that need to be taken into consideration is, they are able to carry out their job duties in accordance to the expectations of their employers.*

*The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper are characteristics of recruitment and selection, recruitment and selection process, sources of recruitment and principles of recruitment and selection.*

**Keyword: Applicants, Recruitment, organization**

## **Introduction**

The process of selecting qualified applicants is a critical step organizations undertake in order to have a talented and committed workforce which will help create a supporting organizational culture and also enhance the overall performance of the organization (Sankey, 2013 & United States Office of Personnel Management, n.d).

In order to ensure that the right people are selected, various methods are used for the screening process including the use of interviews (one on one, panel, team, directive, non directive, stress interviews etc.) and screening tools (personality test, honesty test work sample and miniature job training and evaluation test behavior and situational interviews).

Selection, an aspect of general recruitment process, has been variously defined. Gomez-Mejia et al (2007) defined it as a process of making a 'hire' or no 'hire' decision regarding each applicant for a job. They are also tests or procedures administered to individuals to evaluate their job-related competencies, interests, or fitness for employment (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

In this paper, we examine various types of screening tools; the rationale for adopting each of them with relevant examples. It further looks at the cost that accrues to an organization when the wrong applicants are hired during the recruitment and selection process.

## **Personality Test**

According to Mathis and Jackson (2004), personality is a unique blend of individualistic characteristics that affect interaction with the environment and help define a person. A personality test can be simply described as a questionnaire or other standardized instrument designed to reveal aspects of an individual's character or psychological makeup.

## **Rationale**

It gives the information needed to develop performance enhancement and training programs designed to meet the needs of the individual within the context of a particular performance setting.

It behaviorally defines the characteristics leading to success or failure in a given job.

It helps to determine which behavior leads to the accomplishment of an organization's desired objectives in a situational context.

It's used as a screen out measure for large groups of applicants.

It helps in the prediction of performance.

### Examples of Personality Tests

There are many types of personality tests but the commonly used one is the self-report inventory which is also referred to as the objective personality test. The first personality tests developed in 1920s were intended to ease the process of personnel selection, particularly in the armed forces. Over the years a wide variety of personality tests have been developed, notably among these are the Myers Briggs type Indicator (MBTI), the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and a number of tests based on the Five Factor model of Personality, Four Temperaments or other Generalized Personality trait models.

### Other examples are;

Woodworth Personal Data Sheet, Rorschach Inkblot Test, Personality and Preference Inventory (PAPI), Keirsey Temperament Sorter, 16PF Questionnaire (16 PF), DISC Assessment, Hexaco Personality Inventory, the EQSQ Test, True Colors Test and the Thematic Apperception Test.

### Honesty Test

Honesty tests can also be termed as integrity test. They are tests used by employees to test the honesty or integrity of applicants. A lack of integrity is associated with such counterproductive behaviors as theft, violence, sabotage, disciplinary problems, and absenteeism. Integrity tests have been found to measure some of the same factors as standard personality tests, particularly conscientiousness, and perhaps some aspects of emotional stability and agreeableness.

### Rationale

- To screen out potentially dishonest individuals and attitudes relating to dishonest behavior.
- To decrease the incidence of employee theft and directly measure counterproductive behaviours.
- It sends a message to applicants and employees alike that dishonesty will not be tolerated.

- Designed to assess applicant's tendency to be honest, trustworthy and dependable especially in a job where performance requires a high level of integrity.
- They are valid measures of overall performance since they may reveal applicant's private thoughts and feelings.

### **Examples of Honesty Tests**

Overt integrity tests (also referred to as clear-purpose tests) are designed to directly measure attitudes relating to dishonest behavior. They are distinguished from personality-based tests in that they make no attempt to disguise the purpose of the assessment. Overt tests often contain questions that ask directly about the applicant's own involvement in illegal behavior or wrongdoing (e.g., theft, illicit drug use). Such transparency can make guessing the correct answer obvious. Applicant faking is always a concern with overt integrity tests.

Personality-oriented integrity tests use psychological concepts such as dependability, respect for authority and others. Analyses of these dimensions are used to identify individuals whose psychological 'profile' indicates greater or lesser integrity orientations.

### **Work Sample**

This is psychological testing techniques used in employee-selection to assess an individual's ability to learn the required skills and to perform the tasks associated with a particular job. It is a method of testing ability by giving the candidate a sample of typical work to do and evaluating their performance.

### **Rationale**

- It is useful for reducing bias by assessors and is perceived to be fair and valid by both recruiters and candidates, as all candidates are treated in the same way, including the amount of time to respond (although this may reduce the chances of slow writers or reflective thinkers). It removes non-job-related cognitive factors, and is visibly related to the job in question.
- Also, it has high reliability and high content validity since work samples are a sample of the actual work performed on the job.
- It has low adverse impact because of their relationship to the job. These tests are typically viewed more favorable by examinees than aptitude or personality tests.
- It is difficult for applicants to fake job proficiency which helps to increase the relationship between score on the test and performance on the job.

### **Examples of Work Sample**

- A typing exercise where you need to demonstrate your ability to type and speed.
- Also, for some jobs such as photographers and artist, a sample of work in the form of a portfolio is expected to be presented at the time of interview.
- An employee being employed as a company driver could be tested on driving skills.

### **Work miniature and evaluation test**

Unlike the work sample where applicants are just given a similar work to do, the work miniature and evaluation test first gives applicants some training and after evaluate their performance over a period of time after which a final selection is done based on their performance.

The underlying reason for using this method of screening is to test the ability of the applicants to be trained. It consists of the applicants doing a practical task that they have not done before after having been shown or trained on how to do it. It also measures how well they respond to the training and how their performance on the task improves.

For example in recruiting for manufacturing companies, applicants are first trained on how to use some special machines before evaluated on their performance.

### **Behavioral interviewing**

Behavioral interviewing is an interviewing strategy that considers the candidates' past performance the best indicator of future performance.

### **Rationale**

The underlying reason for adopting it is that the past behavior of an applicant is a better predictor of future behavior about how he/ she would act in a hypothetical future situation. According to Career Services Centre, it is said to be 55 percent predictive of future on-the-job behavior.

### **Examples of Behaviour-based interview**

Behavioral-based interview questions generally start with any one of the following phrases:

- Tell me about a time when you...
- Describe a circumstance when you were faced with a problem related to...
- Think about an instance in which you...

### **Situational Interview**

Unlike a behavioral interview that deals with the past experience of the interviewee, a situational interview is a job interview where a candidate is asked specific questions about what may happen on a job. The candidate is asked to assess a situation and to provide solutions on how he or she would handle it.

The idea is to ask you to describe how you would handle a certain situation, or what you would do under certain circumstances.

Examples of questions that might be asked include

- What would you do if you have to conform to a policy with which you do not agree?
- How will you deal with a very upset customer or co-worker?
- Please tell me what you will do if you have to fire a friend.

### **Cost of wrongful selection to the organization**

Despite the fact that organizations try to get the best of employees to fill positions through the selection process, issues such as subjective validation, poor judgment, faking of information and favoritism tend to make organization wrongfully select candidates for the job.

The mistake of selecting the wrong applicant to fill in a position affects the organizations in various ways such as high labour turnover, low employee engagement, increase labour cost, etc.

### **High labour turnover**

Labour turnover is the rate at which new employee come in and leave the organization. Though other factors could cause high labour turnover, selecting the wrong applicant is also a major cause. High labour turn over brings huge financial constraints in terms of training, job advertisements, time consumption etc. Again, apart from the fact that prospective employees could have negative perception of the organization, high labour turn over can also undermine the confidence, commitment and job security of the current workforce in organization.

### **Low employee engagement**

Engagement refers to the enthusiasm, motivation and level of commitment employees exhibit in the performance of their job duties. The selection of qualified applicants can directly impact employee engagement. Therefore, where an employee has been wrongfully selected his engagement to the job and the organization become unpredictable and fragile.

### **Increase labour cost**

In view of the fact that labour cost make up a huge percentage of overhead expenditure of organizations, a wrongful selection negatively affects the overall labour cost of the organization. The expenditure is not only incurred in terms of salaries and incentives on the wrongfully selected employee but also in terms of advertisements, interviews and other recruitment processes that led to the eventual selection of the candidate for the job.

### **Affects organizational performance**

Since each employees' performance has a direct or indirect impact on the overall organizational performance, wrongful selection will result in the incapable and inefficient workers whose effort will have a negative impact on the organization. According to Armstrong (2009) high performance is also achieved by well motivated people. People will be highly motivated if they have the right skill, attitude, abilities, experience needed to meet the demands of job to be executed. When people are wrongfully selected and placed, they tend to lack the confidence and competence required to engender high employee performance and this ultimately affect the general company performance.

### **Wrong placement**

Wrongful selection can result in mismatch and wrong placement of employee. The attendant effect of wrong placement and mismatch is poor delivery of quality work performance. In fact work related stress, negligence and injuries may occur when employees find themselves at the wrong place and this can result in losses and damage to company reputation.

## Conclusion

Even though tests and interviews may be suitable as screening tools for organizations if properly used, it is important that the tools chosen are used and evaluated to ensure that they remain valid and reliable. They should also not be used independently but be complemented with other screening methods.

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