



HR-RELATED SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Employment interviews

Short Interview exercise:

Choose an organization in your city. Using the information here as a guide, interview a manager responsible for recruitment (ask, for example, about their current recruitment methods and selection tests). Using the information obtained from your interview, develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy for the organization based on the position of the person who you interviewed. Prepare an advertisement, including the cost of advertising in appropriate media outlets. Identify appropriate employment instruments to be used and include the rationale behind your choice. Present your findings in the form of a business report or as an oral presentation to your class.

Interview Guide:

Introduction

The employment interview has been referred to as a conversation with a purpose. However, the conversation has to be planned, directed and controlled. The purpose of the interview is fourfold:

- (1) to probe an applicant's experience/qualifications in order to make an accurate prediction of his or her future performance in the job
- (2) to exchange information about the job and the organization
- (3) to sample an applicant's behaviour
- (4) to find a good match (that is to match an individual's abilities to the job; to match a candidate's needs to the organization's culture).

When it comes to planning the employment interview, there are at least three options:

- (1) structured: that is, compile a list of questions in advance
- (2) semi-structured: only major questions are prepared
- (3) unstructured: topics are prepared but no set questions.

Recent research suggests that reliability and validity can be improved if the interview is structured. This means planning and framing the major questions and some possible follow-up questions to probe deeper if necessary.

Objectives

This learning activity will demonstrate to you the purposes of the employment interview, and help you appreciate the selection errors associated with traditional approaches to employment interviewing.

Procedure

The class is divided into groups. Each group (1) writes a job description and specification for one of the positions listed in the assignment; (2) using the job description and job specification, each group designs a job advertisement (For guidance on this see Checklist 'Evaluating Job Advertisements', Exhibit 1); (3) members of the other groups apply for the position and submit their résumés; (4) develop a screening device in order to reduce the application pool to three candidates; and (5) interview one candidate for the position. Two members of the class observe each group conducting the employment interview. The latter role is important for the analysis and feedback aspects of the role-playing session.

Analysis and feedback following employment interview:

1. Observers give feedback using Observer's Checklist, Exhibit 2.
2. Tutor gives feedback.

EXHIBIT 1 RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING

Criterion*	Advertisement								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Distinctive headlines									
Effective graphics									
Clever and creative									
Avoids sounding too glamorous									
Specifies nature of job and qualifications									
Sells the employee									
Avoids stereotyping									
Helps candidate identify self									
Uses space economically									
Effective typeface									
Proper recruitment media									
TOTALS:									

Ranking (most effective to least effective)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

*Rank each ad for each criterion using the following scale:
 5 = Excellent; 4 = Very good; 3 = Satisfactory; 2 = Below average; 1 = Very poor

EXHIBIT 2 THE EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW: OBSERVER'S CHECKLIST

OPENING – Did the interviewer	Yes	No	Comment
1. Prepare for the interview?			
2. Introduce her/himself and others?			
3. Outline structure of the interview?			
4. Put the interviewee at ease?			

MIDDLE – Did the interviewer	Yes	No	Comment
1. Start with 'open' questions?			
2. Follow with probing questions to obtain more detailed information?			
3. Link questions to open up new subjects for discussion?			

CLOSE - Did the interviewer	Yes	No	Comment
1. Allow time for interviewee's own questions?			
2. Outline next step of the process?			
3. Thank interviewee for attending?			

Long Interview exercise

This assignment is completed over several weeks, and involves four major activities.

Part 1: Write a job description and specification

The staffing process involves developing job descriptions and job specifications. A job description is a broad statement of the purpose, scope, duties and responsibilities of a particular position or job. A job specification is a detailed statement of the physical and mental activities involved in the position or job and, when relevant, of social and physical environmental matters. Working as a group, write a job description and specification for one of the following positions or another position that is appropriate for a student graduating from the programme.

- A. Assistant manager human resources, Servo Engineering
- B. Front desk manager, Alpha Hotel
- C. Office manager, health centre

Part 2: Write a classified job advertisement

Using the job description and job specification developed in Part I, design a job advertisement for the position. Look at job advertisements in newspapers. As part of the exercise state on a separate page: where the advertisement will be placed and why; how long it will run; and what it will cost.

Part 3: Screen applications and prepare an interview

Translate the information in the job description and job specification into a screening instrument.

- (1) Develop a scoring guide to screen the applicants to decide who shall be interviewed.
- (2) Develop the interview questions and explain the rationale for each question (for example how will it help predict the candidate's performance).
- (3) Describe any performance tests you will have the candidate perform as part of the selection process.

Other members of your class 'apply' for the position and submit their own résumé.

Part 4: Interview the candidate

After deciding the three most suitable candidates to be interviewed (based upon Part 3), the group interviews one of the candidates for the position. The interview will be videotaped to permit analysis and feedback.

Assignment documentation

The following documentation should be collated and submitted by (date)

- (1) Job description and specification
- (2) Job advertisement
- (3) Scoring guide used in the screening process
- (4) Interview questions (with rationale)
- (5) Interview scoring guide