Chapter 6 – Selection and Placement

This chapter describes the selection (interviewing, assessments) and placement processes used within HRM. This chapter will probably contain some of the most recognizable material for students, as previous to this class they may have gone through (or even administered) employment interviews. This can be of great advantage, as these experiences may be leveraged during class to assist in reinforcing the material. Students will need to be reminded, however, to view the material as if they are the manager, not the interviewee. The material within this chapter will also be readily identified as important not just to those interested in HR, but to those with aspirations for general managerial positions.

Statistical terminology, such as those found within LO6-1 may be best discussed after providing students with a foundation of selection and methods (LO6-4). Exercises exploring legal and illegal interview questions (LO6-3) may also assist with LO6-4. Instructors may wish to utilize the self-assessment exercise at the end of the book to introduce the concept of personality assessment as it pertains to selection. This may then provide the foundation to explain reliability, validity, and other important statistical information (LO6-1; LO6-5). Juxtaposing these assessments with interview questions may help students differentiate the degree and utility of each of these methods (LO6-2).

Learning Objectives

LO 6-1: Establish the basic scientific properties of personnel selection methods, including reliability, validity, and generalizability.

LO 6-2: Discuss how the particular characteristics of a job, an organization, or an applicant affect the utility of any test.

LO 6-3: Describe the government’s role in personnel selection decisions, particularly in the areas of constitutional law, federal laws, executive orders, and judicial precedent.

LO 6-4: List the common methods used in selecting human resources.

LO 6-5: Describe the degree to which each of the common methods used in selecting human resources meets the demands of reliability, validity, generalizability, utility, and legality.

Society for Human Resource Management *Body of Competency & Knowledge*

This chapter contains content which may be identified within the following content areas in HR Expertise:

* Talent Acquisition
* Diversity & Inclusion
* U.S. Employment Law & Regulations

Human Resource Certification Institute’s *A Guide to the HR Body of Knowledge*

This chapter contains content which may be identified within the following content areas:

* Workforce Planning and Employment

Guidance to Discussion Questions and End of Chapter Sections

**Discussion Question 1:** We examined nine different types of selection methods in this chapter. Assume that you were just rejected for a job based on one of these methods. Obviously, you might be disappointed and angry regardless of what method was used to make this decision, but can you think of two or three methods that might leave you most distressed? In general, why might the acceptability of the test to applicants be an important standard to add to the five we discussed in this chapter?

Responses will vary. Students would likely find tests with lowest reliability and validity levels to be most unsatisfactory; however, it should be identified that if applicants do not find assessments acceptable, they may be inclined to pursue a lawsuit.

**Discussion Question 2:** Video recording applicants in interviews is becoming an increasingly popular means of getting multiple assessments of that individual from different perspectives. Can you think of some reasons why video-recording interviews might also be useful in evaluating the interviewer? What would you look for in an interviewer if you were evaluating one on video?

The recording can be reviewed to examine the candidate and the interviewer’s capabilities. Factors to observe in interviewer behavior include being prepared to start on time, putting the candidate at ease, asking questions that are clear (questions that do not have multiple questions within each and that require more than a yes or no answer), not asking illegal questions, asking questions that are job-related and demonstrating knowledge of the job, and closing the interview appropriately by informing the candidate about what happens next and when he or she will be contacted. Other details, such as a description of the organization, pay, benefits, the job and working conditions, may also be identified as components of the realistic job preview.

**Discussion Question 3:** Distinguish between concurrent and predictive validation designs, and discuss why the latter is preferred over the former. Examine each of the nine selection methods discussed in this chapter and determine which of these would have their validity most and least affected by the type of validation design employed.

The process of predictive validation means that a test is given and the score is not used for selection (the existing techniques are used to decide on hiring). Then, after six to nine months, performance information is gathered and the test score and performance scores are correlated. Concurrent validation is a process in which current employees are given tests, performance information is gathered at the same time, and the test and performance scores are correlated. Predictive validation is preferred, since applicants tend to be more motivated to take the test than current employees (current employees may be threatened by the test). In concurrent validation, one has no way of knowing what was learned on the job and what employees knew or could do before they were hired. Concurrent validation frequently results in restriction of range, since poor performers have probably left and therefore the correlation coefficient is lower. Predictive validation is also preferred by the EEOC.

**Discussion Question 4:** Some observers have speculated that, in addition to increasing the validity of decisions, employing rigorous selection methods has symbolic value for organizations. What message is sent to applicants about the organization through hiring practices, and how might this message be reinforced by recruitment programs that occur before selection and by training programs that occur after selection?

The message may be that the organization wants the individuals best suited for the job and organization. This message can be reinforced through rigorous recruitment methods as well as offering training programs that fit the job requirements and the needs of the individuals.

**Exercising Strategy**

*Employers Unite to Fight “Religious Freedom” Bills*

1. How can one reconcile the religious values espoused by some business owners with the values of LGBT employees or is this strictly a zero-sum game?

Responses will vary depending on students’ perspectives.

1. Why is the effort to thwart religious freedom bills primarily sponsored by large employers, and is there any way to reconcile the values of large employers and small employers on this issue?

Large employers have a larger economic impact on state and local economies than do small companies. Answers on reconciling differences will vary.

1. What does “reasonable accommodation” mean in the personnel selection context, and how does one test for what is “reasonable”?

Reasonable accommodation means making changes that allow a person with special needs to work in a company. For instance, it may mean providing wheelchair ramps or software to aid visually impaired employees. In the case of transgender individuals, it may mean gender-neutral bathrooms. Opinions on what is reasonable will differ.

**Managing People**

*Policing Hiring Practices in the Field of Law Enforcement*

1. How is the nature of police work qualitatively different from most jobs, and what can be done to help organizations share information about their own hiring experiences?

Police have a lot of power over the citizens they are meant to protect, and power can have a corrupting influence. Law enforcement agencies should be legally compelled to use national databases and both report and research wrongdoing before hiring someone.

1. Why might former police officers whose employment had been terminated be better suited than most job incumbents when it comes to avoiding detection?

Responses will vary. It has been well documented that in many cases, police will go to great lengths to protect other police. Also, moving from state to state can protect a bad officer when states don’t share information.

**HR in Small Business**

Kinaxis Chooses Sales Reps with Personality

1. What selection methods did Bob Dolan use for hiring salespeople? Did he go about using these methods in the best order? What, if anything, would you change about the order of the methods used?

Students should identify the interview and personality assessment. They may suggest that the personality assessment occur prior to the interview, as the personality assessment may be cheaper to administer to 20 than to interview 20 candidates. It may also have identified good candidates that were misidentified during the interview process. Students could also suggest that the question concerning major accounts actually be a component of the interview phase, where the interviewer embeds it in strong interview questions.

1. What were the advantages to Kinaxis of using personality tests to help select sales representatives? What were the disadvantages?

The advantage is that they identified candidates who met the profile of successful employees. The disadvantage is that it did not provide Dolan the ability to exclude more than 2 potential candidates.

1. Given the information gathered from the selection methods, what process did Dolan use to make his selection decision? What improvements can you recommend to this process for decisions to hire sales reps in the future?

Responses should reflect that he used concurrent validity to establish the personality inventory. In the future, he should look to establish predictive validity with a series of assessments, which could allow for better identification of good candidates.

Guidance to Chapter Cases

**A Look Back**

*Validation and Personnel Selection: Strangers No More*

1. Based on this chapter, what are the best methods of obtaining information about job applicants and how might these have been used at Uber to prevent many of the problems they created?

Some ways to obtain information on prospective hires include criminal background checks, employment references, psychological tests, aptitude tests, education verification, etc. Certainly requiring criminal background checks would be useful at Uber.

1. What are the best characteristics to look for in applicants, and how does this depend on the nature of the job? How does the unique nature of jobs at ridesharing companies like Uber affect selection methods?

Different jobs have different skill requirements, and each applicant should be evaluated with the appropriate skill set in mind. Companies like Uber that use nonemployees to provide services need to be extra vigilant about who they are enabling.

1. If you could use only two of the methods described in this chapter and could assess only two of the characteristics discussed, which would you choose, and why?

Responses will vary, and should be related to a specific job.

**Competing through Technology**

*One Part Personality plus One Part AI: The Formula for Team Chemistry*

1. How does the evolution to team-based structures change the equation when it comes to personnel selection and placement?

Many factors must be taken into account, including compatibility with the other team members. Individual talent is necessary, but team skills are also becoming a requisite for jobs.

1. In what ways are AI analytic solutions similar to—and different from—traditional criterion-related validation approaches?

They are similar in that they take several factors into account and they can develop biases. They are different in that the biases can be eliminated, and information is added after every team project so it becomes better at determining which traits are best for different team projects.

**Competing through Environmental, Social, and Governance Practices**

According to Harvard: “Asian-Americans Have Bad Personalities”

1. Do you believe there is merit in organizations being representative of the larger society in which they are embedded or should every selection decision be based totally on individual merit—regardless of the negative impact this might have on representativeness? How might one’s own demographic profile affect how one balances the merits of representativeness on the one hand, with demographically blind selection methods on the other hand?

Responses will vary.

**Competing through Globalization**

*Phantom Hires Haunt Saudi Change Efforts*

1. How does the unique nature of Saudi culture make it difficult to change the rules of engagement for workers like the ones seen here?

When jobs are guaranteed, it is hard to motivate employees. Conversely, when businesses are penalized for not hiring Saudis, it is an invitation to cheat the system. The current rules also do not encourage foreign workers.

1. What aspects of Saudi politics make it easier to change the rules of engagement for these workers?

The Saudi rulers make the rules, so they can change them.

1. In the end, which of these two forces are likely to win out and why?

Responses will vary, but should discuss changes that Saudis need to make to motivate workers.

**Integrity in Action**

Serving Up Soup, Rehabilitation, and Compassion

1. Do you believe the local experiment described here could be replicated on a national scale, where one sees a whole restaurant chain built upon this “dual purpose” business venture?

Responses will vary.

1. Can you think of other industries other than hospitality that might also be suited—or suited better—for this unique business model that blends charity with commerce?

Responses will vary.

Other Classroom Materials: CONNECT

There are CONNECT exercises available through McGraw-Hill, which can greatly assist student preparation for class and understanding of chapter concepts. Instructors may wish to structure the class, where students must complete the CONNECT exercises prior to class, thus, further reinforcing material and allowing instructors to expand and challenge student understanding during class time. CONNECT exercises may be set-up to be time-based, requiring students to practice chapter materials for a specific timeframe. It is the instructors’ discretion how they desire to include this into the course grade, but a low-stakes grading system based on completion is suggested to help encourage student usage, while minimizing penalties for mistakes during completion.

The following activities are available in Connect for this chapter:

**Personnel Selection Methods**

*Case Analysis*

This activity reviews various personnel selection methods.

LO: 06-05 Describe the degree to which each of the common methods used in selecting human resources meets the demands of reliability, validity, generalizability, utility, and legality.

Difficulty: 2 Medium

Blooms: Apply; Analyze

AACSB: Knowledge Application

Topic: Properties of Employee Selection

**Legal Standards for Selecting Employees**

*Click & Drag*

This activity presents various HR terms and asks students to match them to the appropriate employee selection law.

LO: 06-03 Describe the government’s role in personnel selection decisions, particularly in the areas of constitutional law, federal laws, executive orders, and judicial precedent.

Difficulty: 2 Medium

Blooms: Remember

AACSB: Knowledge Application

Topic: Constraints on the Hiring Process

**Interviewing Candidates**

*Case Analysis*

This activity reviews the various types of interviews.

LO: 06-04 List the common methods used in selecting human resources.

06-05 Describe the degree to which each of the common methods used in selecting human resources meets the demands of reliability, validity, generalizability, utility, and legality.

Difficulty: 1 Easy; 2 Medium; 3 Hard

Blooms: Remember; Understand

AACSB: Analytical Thinking

Topic: Employment Interviews

**Manager's Hot Seat: Diversity in Hiring**

*Video Case*

This activity discusses the issue of diversity and bias in hiring, specifically about race.

LO: 06-01 Establish the basic scientific properties of personnel selection methods, including reliability, validity, and generalizability.

06-03 Describe the government’s role in personnel selection decisions, particularly in the areas of constitutional law, federal laws, executive orders, and judicial precedent.

06-05 Describe the degree to which each of the common methods used in selecting human resources meets the demands of reliability, validity, generalizability, utility, and legality.

Difficulty: 2 Medium; 3 Hard

Blooms: Understand; Apply

AACSB: Reflective Thinking; Analytical Thinking; Knowledge Application

Topic: Recruitment Policies and Techniques

**Using Personality Measures for Employee Selection**

*Click & Drag*

This activity asks students to categorize individuals based on the "Big Five" dimensions of personality.

LO: 06-04 List the common methods used in selecting human resources.

Difficulty: 3 Hard

Blooms: Evaluate

AACSB: Analytical Thinking

Topic: Personality Inventories

**Is It Valid and Reliable?**

*Click & Drag*

This activity asks students to evaluate several selection process methods a university is using to hire two new professors and determine whether they are valid, reliable, both, or neither.

LO: 06-01 Establish the basic scientific properties of personnel selection methods, including reliability, validity, and generalizability.

06-05 Describe the degree to which each of the common methods used in selecting human resources meets the demands of reliability, validity, generalizability, utility, and legality.

Difficulty: 3 Hard

Blooms: Apply

AACSB: Knowledge Application

Topic: Validity and Reliability

**CHRO Conversations: Interview with Jim Duffy**

*Video Case*

This activity has students watch a video interview with the Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer at the CIT Group and answer questions about the selection and placement process for organizations.

LO: 06-05 Describe the degree to which each of the common methods used in selecting human resources meets the demands of reliability, validity, generalizability, utility, and legality.

Difficulty: 2 Medium

Blooms: Analyze

AACSB: Analytical Thinking

Topic: Properties of Employee Selection