

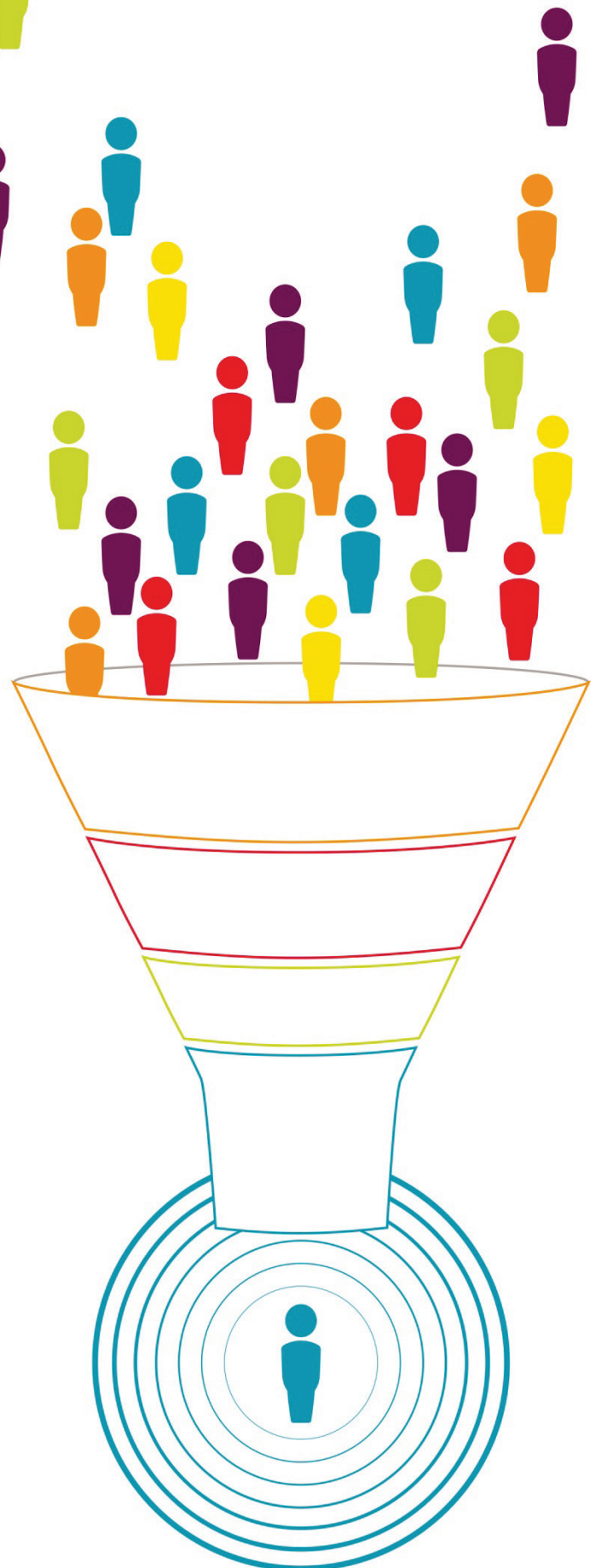
Best people in = best results out

Building a selection process that
works for your organisation

John Hackston

People have been applying for jobs since around 1800 BC, when apprenticeships were invented in ancient Babylon. Many interview questions probably date back nearly as far. There is now a wide array of selection methods for recruiters to choose from, ranging from in-depth work simulations to old-fashioned interviews, but the amount of choice can become confusing. In addition, technology has been as much a hindrance as a help, with nearly 20% of employers reporting that online job applications and other electronic aids have overwhelmed their recruitment processes, without improving the quality of the candidates who apply. In this context it is hardly surprising that many organisations stick with the same methods they have always used, even when more effective methods are readily available.

This paper presents the reasons for change – how better selection can reap significant financial and other rewards – and goes on to show how to put a reliable, valid, fair and cost-effective selection process together that will not only lead to better selection decisions, but also boost the reputation of your brand.



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Introduction

Selecting the right person for the job? With the latest AGR Graduate Recruitment Survey underlining that there are more people chasing fewer jobs, and with all the resources of the internet to support recruitment, surely there has never been a better time to be a recruiter? Well, not quite. *More* applicants is not necessarily the same as *more good* applicants; the most recent *Labour Market Outlook* shows that over half of employers believe that while the automation of recruitment processes *has* increased the number of applicants, it *has not* increased the talent pool. Indeed, 17% of employers say that online applications and other automation have overwhelmed rather than helped the recruitment process.

Impact of automation on recruitment

Increased the number of applicants, though not necessarily the pool of talent



No impact on the talent pool



Increased the pool of talent



Overwhelmed the recruitment process



Allowed candidates to 'game' the process



Increased the time to fill a vacancy



Other



Source: CIPD Labour Market Outlook, Spring 2013

When it comes to selecting candidates, however, organisations often use the same methods as they always have, a point underlined in the CIPD's latest *Resourcing and talent planning* report. And yet we know that a combination of more modern, objective selection tools and an intelligent use of the internet can yield real dividends.

No selection method is perfect, but some work better than others. If we look at what percentage of later job performance can be predicted by different assessment methods, this is what the research shows us:

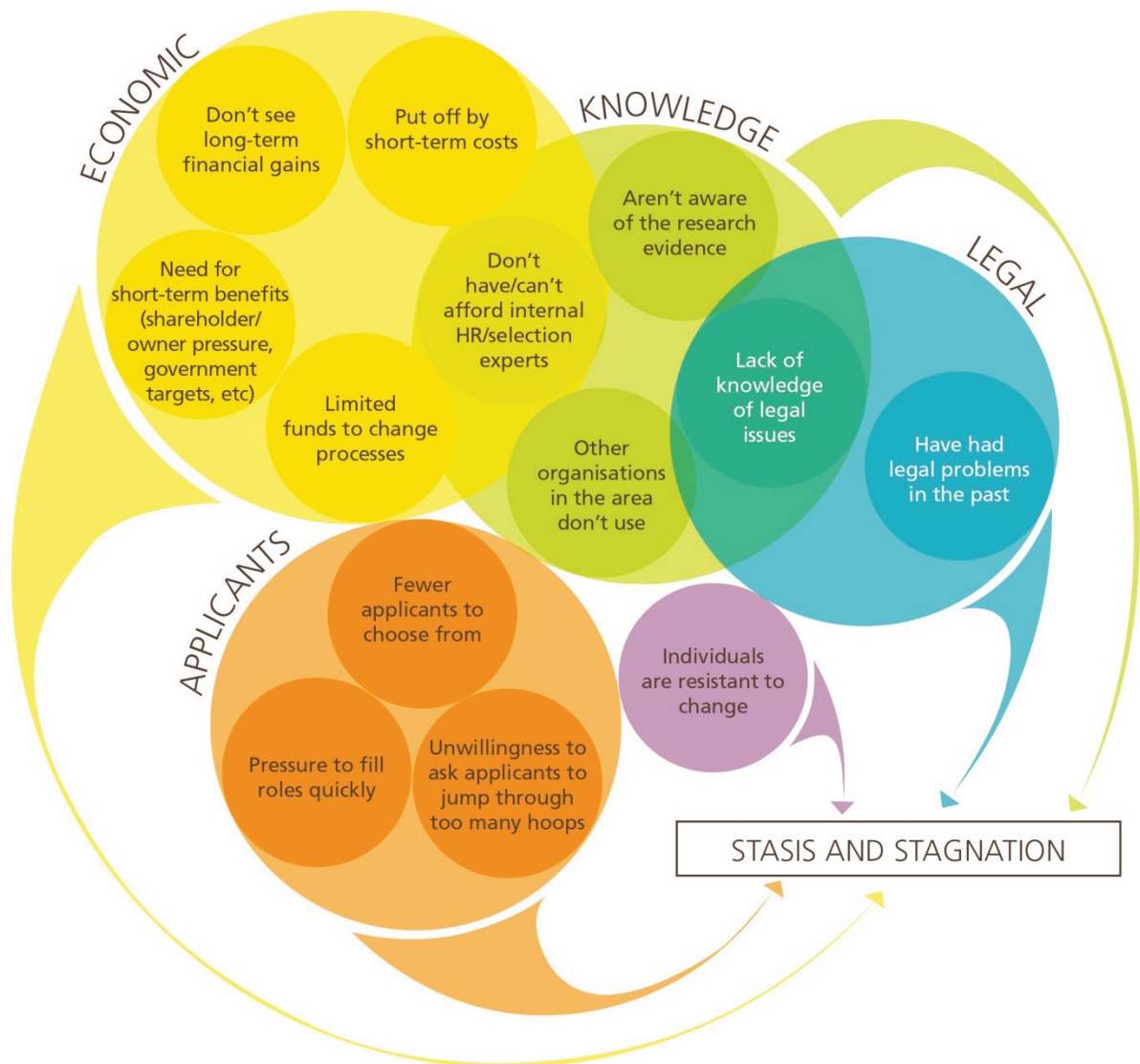
How much of job performance is predicted by different selection methods



Adapted from Cook, 1993 and Robertson and Smith, 2001

More detail on all of these assessment methods is given on pages 7 to 12 of this paper.

Despite this research, there are many pressures that tend to stop organisations from adopting new selection processes, even though these are likely to lead to better selection decisions. These are summarised on the next page.



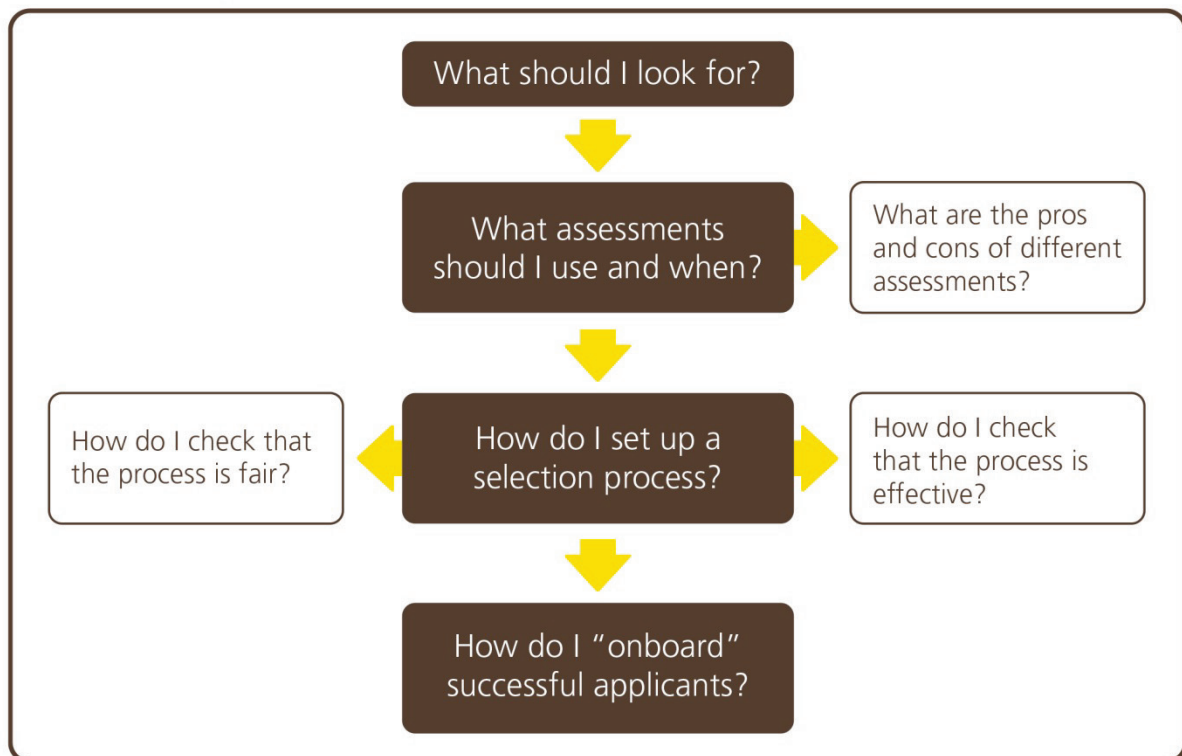
Source: Klehe, 2004

So how can you overcome these pressures and improve your organisation's process? Let's take a look at why it's worth trying, and what steps you can take to move towards a better selection process. We've summarised this on the next page.

Deciding whether to change



The selection process



Why change things?

Getting bang for your buck

Organisations will often focus on short-term gains. Whilst sometimes necessary, when it comes to selection, skimping on the pennies now can have major repercussions later. One of the key things to remember when choosing selection methods is that tools that are *more valid* will predict job performance *better*, and will therefore account for a greater proportion of job performance. The more valid the assessment, the better. Research across a range of organisations suggests that the amount an employer can save, per employee recruited, per year, can be calculated as follows:

$$\left(\begin{array}{c} \text{validity of} \\ \text{assessment} \\ \text{process} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{c} \text{calibre} \\ \text{of} \\ \text{recruits} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{c} \text{standard} \\ \text{deviation} \\ \text{of job} \\ \text{performance} \end{array} \right) - \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{cost of selection} \\ \text{proportion} \\ \text{of applicants} \\ \text{selected} \end{array} \right)$$

This formula, known as the utility equation, may look complex, but it has been used successfully by HR professionals to justify the use of psychometric instruments and other objective assessment methods. For example, it is regularly employed by the HR team of one major airline – very useful in a sector where financial pressures are now greater than ever.

Here's an example that we have worked through:

- If we were looking at a position with a salary of £45,000, and used a conservative estimate of the extent to which the role would impact the organisation's productivity, the utility equation predicts that using psychometric tests instead of an unstructured interview would increase the organisation's productivity by £13,620 per employee.
- This assumes that the candidate remains in the job for just one year; if they remain for three years, the productivity increase could be as much as £40,860.
- Remember that this is pure productivity 'profit'; the equation has already taken account of any increased cost of the new

selection process, and the benefit will be seen over both the short and long term.

If you'd like some help applying this equation to your organisation, please get in touch with OPP's Research and Development team.

Of course, any approach like this assumes that organisations will at least keep track of how much their selection processes cost. The most recent *Labour Market Outlook* survey, however, suggests that only half of employers calculate the cost of recruitment. But forgetting about a problem won't make it go away!

How much difference will a new method make?

In most situations, the existing selection methods, while not terribly effective, are at least better than chance; it might be, for example, that 60% of those hired with the current system are successful in the job. Introducing a new, more valid selection tool will result in the recruitment of a higher percentage of successful workers, and hence higher productivity, but the extent of the improvement will depend not just on the validity of the new tool, but also on how choosy the recruiter can afford to be.

With 20 applicants for each job, introducing ability tests might be expected to boost the proportion of effective workers from 60% to over 90%; with two applicants for each job the proportion might rise less, to around 80%. This approach was first developed by two psychologists, Taylor and Russell, back in 1939, but it remains relevant wherever there are several applications for a post.

For example, when Costa Coffee advertised for eight barrista jobs in a new Nottingham branch, it was deluged with 1,701 applications – or 212 candidates for each post. On average, the number of applicants for different types of job varies between 45 (for entry-level jobs) to 10 (for senior-level jobs), meaning that it is almost always worthwhile improving the validity of the selection process.

What selection tools can you use?

Here are some of the main methods, with their pros and cons.

Ability or aptitude tests

These tests assess cognitive abilities such as problem-solving, reasoning, verbal fluency or numeracy. Sometimes, 'ability' is used to mean the same thing as 'intelligence'. They usually contain questions with just one correct answer. Traditionally these tests were administered via pencil and paper, but now they are often completed online.

Pros



- One of the best predictors of job performance
- Very cost-effective
- Can be completed online, saving time and resources at selection events
- The ability-related aspects of jobs are usually measured much more effectively by an ability test than by other methods

Cons



- Many require training to use and interpret
- Some tests can show adverse impact, with (for example), men typically performing better than women on some tests, and women better than men on others, or majority groups performing better than minority groups
- Candidates may not enjoy completing them

Assessment centres

Candidates take part in a range of exercises, typically including some combination of group discussions, presentations, fact-finding exercises, work sample tests, simulations or 'in-tray' exercises, questionnaires and interviews. Each exercise is scored by one or more assessors against a set of competencies. Finally there is an assessor discussion to decide on each candidate's overall score and suitability for the post.

Pros



- By combining a range of tools that relate to the job, this method is considered to be a very good predictor of performance in the job
- Helps with buy-in to selection decisions from the business, as assessors are often line managers from outside HR

Cons



- Less good at predicting job performance than they should be; a combination of work sample tests (where available), ability tests, structured interviews and personality questionnaires on their own are often better
- Time-consuming and therefore expensive
- Assessors require training and periodic monitoring

Why aren't assessment centres always as good as they should be?

Assessment centres should be highly predictive of job performance; after all, they contain assessments that work well on their own. Yet research suggests that assessment centres are often less predictive than their component parts. How can this be? Well, there are a number of reasons:

- Assessor training can be neglected, leading to subjective judgments
- Scoring of exercises can be subjective if not carefully designed
- The link between assessments and competencies is not always clearly defined
- Some measures, in particular group exercises, can be highly situational and can favour extraverts over introverts
- Exercises that have been assessed by several people can assume undue importance in the assessor discussion; unfortunately, these can be some of the least predictive parts of a centre
- The group dynamics of the assessor discussion can impact on objective decision-making.

So, to realise the benefits of an assessment centre, ensure that assessors are trained, that exercises can be objectively scored and clearly link to competencies, that no one exercise is allowed to predominate, and that the assessor discussion is carefully controlled.

Experience

This is often seen as an important factor in selection – surely a candidate's previous experience will be a good guide to how they will perform in a new job?

Pros



- Easy to collect information
- When a candidate is applying for a job that is very similar to their current one, experience is clearly relevant

Cons



- How well someone has done in their current or past jobs can only ever be a partial guide to how well they will perform in a new job. Relying too much on experience can lead to the *Peter Principle* (Peter and Hull, 1969): "Employees tend to rise to their level of incompetence"

Graphology

This seeks to say something about an individual's personality by looking at their handwriting.

Pros



- Graphologists would say that candidates cannot disguise their handwriting – in other words, they can't 'cheat'

Cons



- Despite many research studies, there is no convincing evidence that it works; the British Psychological Society paper *The Validity of Graphology in Personnel Assessment* gives a good summary of this
- Selection decisions based on graphology are likely to be no better than chance

Structured interviews

These are interviews where a standard set of questions has been agreed beforehand. Typically these will relate to the competencies required for the job (structured competency-based interviews).

Pros



- They work – usually a very good predictor of later job performance

Cons



- Interviewers require training in order to carry out structured interviews correctly
- More time-consuming and require more effort than traditional unstructured interviews

Unstructured interviews

These are also known as traditional interviews. The questions have not been agreed beforehand. An interviewer may have favourite questions that they like to ask, regardless of the specific job.

Pros



- Widely used, and so companies tend to buy in to them as a 'tried and tested' method
- Seemingly easy to conduct

Cons



- Poor predictor of later job performance
- Often leads to bias and cloning; interviewers tend to prefer people who are like them
- Encourage snap-decisions based on limited data, with some recruiters saying they can 'spot the right person as soon as they walk in the door'
- Can suffer from the 'halo or horns effect' – interviewees are seen as marvellous at everything or terrible at everything
- Odd, inappropriate or even illegal questions may be asked
- Unstructured panel interviews in particular are poor value for money

Personality questionnaires

These are structured (usually multiple choice) questionnaires designed to measure temperament, personal characteristics, style or personality.

Pros



- Genuinely objective
- An effective predictor of later job performance
- Can often be completed online, saving time and resources at selection events
- The information can also be used for onboarding and development of successful candidates
- Difficult to fake/cheat
- Cost-benefit analyses show that they offer good value for money

Cons



- Often require investment in training or qualification to use and interpret, although some modern online systems can do this for you
- Are sometimes seen as expensive, due to a perception that upfront investment is high

Best people in = best results out

References

These are a traditional part of many organisations' selection processes.

Pros



- If checked, they can at least tell you if a candidate did actually work in the job they claim they did

Cons



- Other than a bald statement of "they worked here", references these days often don't tell you much, and many HR departments have a policy of providing minimum levels of data
- Referees are unlikely to say negative things about the candidate
- Many organisations ask for references but do not bother to check them

Cons



- It can be tempting for recruiters to sift candidates by asking for higher qualifications than necessary for the role; having a particular qualification may be necessary, but having a higher grade or a higher qualification may make no difference to how well someone will perform in the job
- Relying too heavily on qualifications can lead to adverse impact; for example, women may be more likely to have a particular qualification than men; if not justifiable, this may be judged in law as an example of unfair selection
- There is a risk that someone may be (or may see themselves) as over-qualified, quickly losing interest in the job

Scorable application forms

Online application forms have been around for a long time now.

Qualifications

Many jobs require candidates to have formal qualifications in relevant disciplines.

Pros



- Specific qualifications are necessary for some roles, and may be required by law for some others
- Are seen as objective (although the reality may sometimes be different)
- Easy and inexpensive to collect

Pros



- Can be automatically scored for specific experience, criteria or qualifications
- Can have short 'testlets' or personality questionnaires embedded in them

Cons



- Can be expensive to develop, especially if different roles in an organisation require different questions to be asked
- Can be expensive to administer
- If the questions are not carefully thought through, can lead to adverse impact (where different demographic groups have been shown to perform differently on certain types of measure)

Best people in = best results out

Social media

The use of social media is an increasing trend (a theme explored by OPP in our conference presentations and blogs). Social media can be employed in two ways – overtly and covertly.

Overt use of social media

An example of this is when a company's Facebook page invites prospective employees to get in touch with a member of that company's recruitment team to express an interest in working for the company. A variation is where current employees of that company state their place of employment on their own Facebook pages and prospective employees – both friends and strangers – get in touch to ask about what it is like to be employed there. Some of those enquiries to current employees get passed on to the recruitment team, who build up a database of talent. They stay in touch with all the members of that database (most of whom are employed by other companies) and contact them selectively when a particular vacancy arises.

Pros



- Quick, easy and inexpensive; some organisations have saved thousands of pounds by avoiding using an external recruiter
- Helps companies attract the next generation of talent by developing a passive but engaged pool of potential recruits
- More intelligent, advanced uses of social media may have as yet unrealised possibilities for recruitment and selection (see M. Jeffrey, *A radical vision of recruitment in Recruiter*)

Cons



- Not everyone uses social media – so not a level playing field
- 37% of people admit to building an online persona that does not necessarily reflect the real person accurately

Covert use of social media

This is when a company receives an application from a prospective employee and then goes to that person's Facebook or LinkedIn page or their Twitter feed in order to try and find out something about them.

Pros



- Possibility of an unguarded view of the 'real candidate' – do they have an unacceptable public persona?

Cons



- Contradicts HR ethics (and the law) in that factors such as age, gender, ethnic origin and appearance are visible and can (possibly unwittingly) bias selection
- Likely to contradict data protection legislation
- Prone to discrimination, as social networking searches typically happen in private and are undocumented
- As with overt use, not everyone uses social media – so not a level playing field
- An individual's behaviour in their social life and in the past may not be a good indicator of their behaviour in the workplace
- Little or no evidence to show that covert candidate searches predict job performance
- May not be acceptable to candidates, trades unions, or other bodies, and may therefore damage an organisation's reputation

Best people in = best results out

Work sample tests

These are tests that sample some of the behaviours or activities used in a real job – for example, a set of emails and documentation to work through, or a call centre simulation. Work sample tests often form part of an assessment centre, but can be used in other contexts too.

Pros



- Good work sample tests predict later job performance extremely well
- Give candidates a realistic job preview

Cons



- Unless very carefully designed, can be difficult to score
- Often expensive to develop
- Any one work sample test may only be relevant for a limited number of roles; this may therefore not always be a cost effective method

Creating a selection process

So you've got an idea of which selection methods you might want or not want to use. How do you then design a process that works optimally for your organisation and the role in question?

Find out what you are looking for

Before you design a selection process, it is crucial that you know exactly what you are looking for – exactly what skills, attributes or behaviours someone will need to be successful in the role. The word "exactly" is important; phrases like "a good personality" aren't particularly useful. Traditionally, this has been done by a process of job analysis, which uses a range of techniques to find out more about the content of jobs and the attributes of those best suited for them. The output of job analysis is often a competency framework such as the one opposite.

Intellectual

Analytical Problem-Solving
Innovation
Strategic Vision
Commercial Awareness
Clear Written Communication
Technological Orientation

Drive and Resilience

Drive for Excellent Results
Customer Focus
Continuous Learning
Coping with Pressure
Initiative
Flexibility
Decision-Making
Planning and Organising
Reliability

Interpersonal

Cooperative Teamwork
Influencing
Clear Oral Communication
Management of Others
Integrity and Respect for Others

Job analysis can be a painstaking, time-consuming process; today's jobs can change too quickly for traditional methods. Some online systems provide a quicker method of working out what competencies are the most relevant to a job.

Choosing the right tools

Once you know what you want to measure, you need to decide how to measure it. The descriptions of different selection tools in the previous section should help you to think about what might be best. Look at what you are thinking of using and ask yourself these seven questions:

- Is it **valid**? Is there any evidence that it predicts job performance and measures what it is supposed to measure?
- Does it add something **unique**? It will add value if it measures something different to the other tools you are using.
- Does it offer **value for money**? An expensive tool that is valid and unique is better value than a cheap one that does not predict job performance well.
- Is it **fair**? Is there any evidence that the tool might discriminate between different groups, on the basis of characteristics unrelated to the job?
- Are there **hidden costs**? With tests and questionnaires, costs are usually clear and up-front. Other methods may have hidden costs – for example, an interview and write-up might tie up the time of two senior managers for an hour and a half per candidate. It is important to take all costs into account.
- Is it **reliable**? Does it give consistent results? Is there evidence for this?
- Is it **convenient** – eg online and fast?

Fair selection

For ethical and legal reasons, it is important that any selection process is as fair as possible. Sometimes this means that organisations avoid tests or questionnaires, yet the careful use of appropriate tools can help to increase the actual and perceived fairness of selection. To ensure that your selection process is fair, follow these steps:

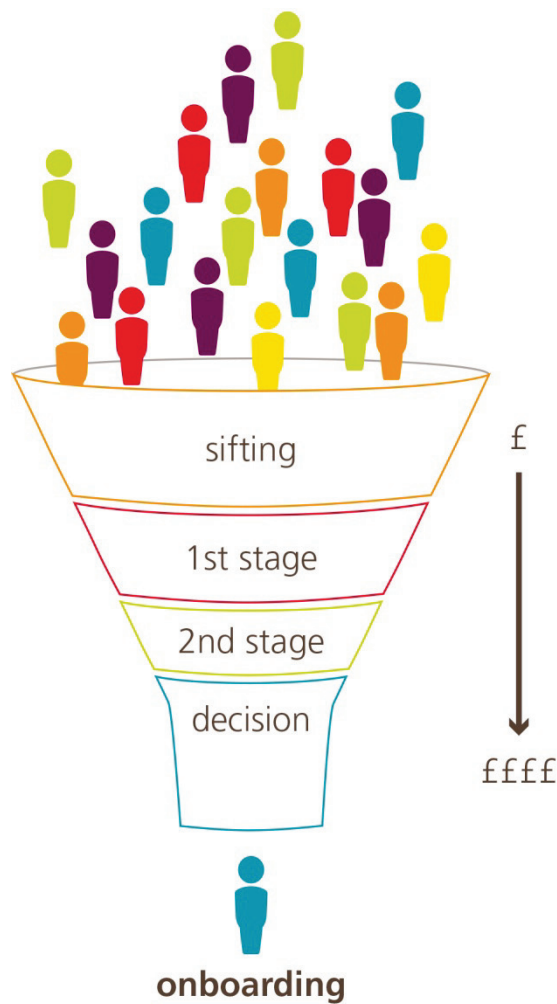
- Have an up-to-date **policy on ethical and fair selection**.
- Before any selection process, ensure that you know exactly **what attributes** are needed for the job.
- Choose selection methods carefully. Use **reliable, valid and well-constructed** tools that are relevant to the job.
- **Prepare** candidates well, using practice leaflets or test-takers' guides if available.
- Monitor! Always **maintain records** of application and selection rates for relevant gender, racial and national groups and those with mental or physical disabilities.
- Be aware of the difference between **adverse impact** and **unfair selection**. For example, women may on average perform worse than men on a numerical test (adverse impact), but if there is clear evidence for the relevance of the test for the job, you should still be able to use it.
- Base selection decisions on a **variety of selection methods** and not just on one.
- Although **positive discrimination** at the point of selection is not legal, it is permissible to provide extra access training to minority groups that might help them to meet the needs of the job. This is an example of **positive action**.
- Take steps to ensure the selection conditions are adjusted to be suitable for those with disabilities, such that the selection procedures do not discriminate against the individual by differential impact through factors irrelevant to their ability to do the job. This should include active steps to find out the special needs of participants prior to selection events.

The selection funnel

If you need to keep things simple, the research evidence suggests that a good value but valid selection process might include:

- One or two job-relevant ability tests
- A personality questionnaire
- A structured interview

To get the maximum return on investment, most selection procedures will include a number of stages, with progressively fewer people being assessed at each step – the 'selection funnel'. The most expensive tools are best used in the later stages, saving money.



Sifting

In the first stage of selection, you will be sifting through potentially very large numbers of applications in order to decide who to take on to the next stage. Traditionally, this involved reading through large numbers of application forms. However, with more applicants for each job and advances in technology, most organisations are using other methods:

- **Outsourcing initial recruitment.** Many organisations take the hassle out of recruitment by outsourcing either the whole process or the initial stages to a recruitment agency (via the Recruitment & Employment Confederation, for example). This is a low-risk option when offered on a 'no employee, no fee' basis, and may be particularly attractive to smaller organisations without a dedicated HR function. However, it is important that the agency is given a very clear brief (once again, you need to know what you are looking for), and outsourcing can be an expensive option.
- **Scorable application forms** (see above). These can be much more than a convenient way to record information that a human being then needs to read through. Researchers (eg Simperl and Mochol) have begun to use semantic analysis to extract meaning, and so perform the sort of task a human expert reading the application form might do, although this technology is still in its infancy.
- **Social media** offers the potential to find out useful information about candidates – but like many new approaches, has several potential pitfalls. See "Guidance for using social media" on the next page.
- **Applicant tracking systems**, or talent management systems, are all-rounder software applications that allow the tracking of individual candidates. Most will send out acceptance/rejection emails etc, and some will provide sifting tools such as online tests or scorable application forms. They allow the recruitment process to be automated.

Guidance for using social media

- Avoid using Facebook or Twitter for pre-selection searches, on account of the potential bias and subjectivity that an unsuccessful applicant might allege led the employer to reject them.
- Ask yourself whether you really need to screen candidates via social media. Does it add anything to the process? Such information can be prone to misinterpretation or misunderstanding.
- Have a clear policy in place and take formal legal advice on it, as employers can fall foul of employment and data protection laws. Don't add an applicant as a 'Facebook friend' to investigate their background, or you risk breaching data protection legislation.
- Keep records of how you found the candidates and of anything that demonstrates how your hiring decisions were based upon consistent, objective and job-relevant searches. Your documents need to support your decisions.
- Consider using social media only after initial interviews, and even then only as background checks.

First stage selection

The next stage of the recruitment process reduces the number of candidates further, using techniques that give more fine-grained results than the initial sift, while not being too expensive or resource-hungry.

Traditionally this stage consisted of a face-to-face 'first interview', but improvements in technology combined with the need to reduce costs mean that now the first stage is often online.

First stage selection will often consist of one of more of the following:

- **Ability tests** and/or **personality questionnaires**, delivered online or face-to-face
- Short **simulations** or work samples, often delivered online
- **Interviews**, either face-to-face or via telephone or Skype.

As first stage selection moves online, the distinction between this stage and sifting is becoming blurred. It is important therefore to use powerful tools like psychometric tests carefully, by following guidelines or using a specialist automated system to guide any decision-making.

Second stage selection

This is typically the final decision-making stage; numbers are smaller and more resource-intensive selection tools can be used. This may simply mean an in-depth structured interview, but this stage often consists of an assessment centre, which may include some or all of the following:

- Competency-based interviews
- Technical interviews
- Ability tests
- Personality questionnaires, with detailed feedback
- Group exercises
- Work simulations
- Presentations

Best people in = best results out

Assessing your selection methods

Is your process efficient? Across the whole selection process, do you have a cost-effective approach? Throughout the process keep these questions in mind:

- Are you using methods that have proven validity and hence good cost-benefit?
- Are you doing anything face-to-face that you could do online or via telephone?
- Have you looked at any hidden costs, such as interviewer time?
- Having taken this into account, are your least expensive assessments earlier on in your process, and your most expensive ones later?

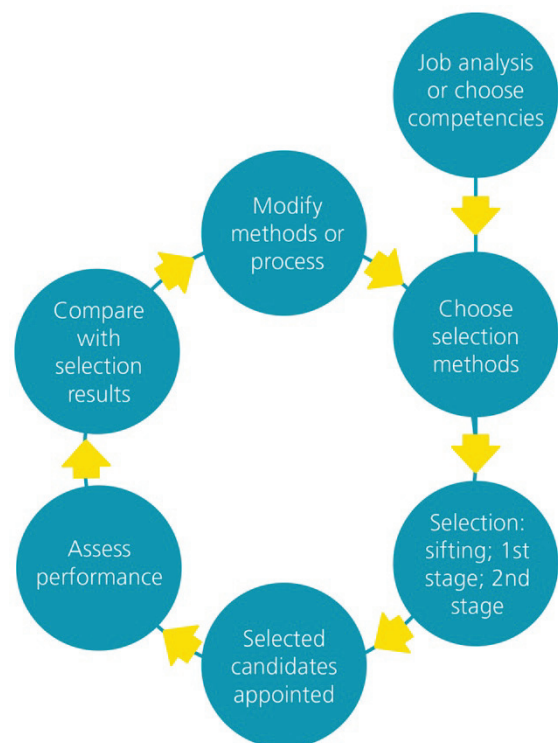
Onboarding

Picture this scenario. A football team has paid a vast amount of money for a new signing, but then ignores everything they know about the player when it comes to their training, their position, and so on. It sounds ridiculous, and yet this is what happens all the time in recruitment; organisations amass a vast amount of information during the selection process, but then ignore it when it comes to developing the successful recruit.

With the applicant's permission, this data can be an excellent springboard for their ongoing development. If an individual is unclear about their role, lacks knowledge of the organisational culture or is not accepted by others in the organisation, they are not likely to perform well. Looking at things this way, recruitment is just the first stage of the employee life cycle, and onboarding allows a smooth transition to take place.

Follow up – validating the process

No selection process is perfect, and most can be improved. Once employees are in place, their job performance can be measured and these results compared with their results on the tools used to recruit them. In this way, an organisation can continually improve the selection process, putting more weight on the elements that predict later performance well, and modifying those elements that work less well.



This follow-up process is technically known as *predictive validation* and does involve a certain amount of statistical analysis; however test publishers and other professionals are often very happy to work with client organisations on validation projects – sometimes at reduced cost or even for free. Even if a full validity study is not carried out, however, employers should always review and monitor their selection processes.

Boosting your brand

Your selection process is a shop window for your organisation. For many specialist organisations and consultancies, every rejected candidate may be a potential future customer – so it is important to leave them with a good impression. Other companies may have local competition for recruits (some call centres, for example), where treating applicants well can give a competitive advantage.

The way in which an organisation goes about its recruitment can reflect on its reputation and brand management

In general, the way in which an organisation goes about its recruitment can reflect on its reputation and brand management, and when things go wrong, there can be considerable negative publicity. In September 2013, candidates for a sales role with electrical retailer Curry's were asked to perform a dance as part of their assessment (see OPP's *Personality Matters* blog, September 2013). The resulting bad publicity was featured across a wide range of electronic and print media.

With this in mind, here are a few simple dos and don'ts to help you boost your brand:

- Do** keep candidates informed and communicated with – or the best candidates may go elsewhere.
- Do** ensure that you use job-relevant assessment methods and that you know why you are using each tool. Tell candidates in advance what you are doing and why.
- Do** ensure that all staff have training in any recruitment activities they carry out – and that includes interviews!
- Do** treat recruitment professionally – turn off your phone, put up a 'do not disturb' sign, don't cancel selection appointments at the last moment, and in general put the 'day job' to one side.
- Do** offer all candidates feedback on their results.
- Don't** forget to let candidates know of any changes to dates or other arrangements, or they may think they have been forgotten about.
- Don't** use assessments or questions that are not relevant to the job. Your favourite unusual interview question might work for you, but might be confusing or even discriminatory to candidates. Even Google, famous for asking quirky questions, seems to be changing its approach (see Shankar's article in *Arbitrage*).
- Don't** rush to get candidates out the door after (or during) an interview or other selection exercise. Tell them up-front how much time things will take and stick to the timetable.
- Don't** forget to give feedback to the successful candidates as well as the unsuccessful ones.

Conclusion

Selecting the right person for the job isn't easy – and however hard you try, you won't get it right 100% of the time. Nevertheless, most organisations can do a great deal to make their selection processes better and more cost-effective, by adopting four simple steps:

1. Establish what skills, attributes or behaviours are needed to be effective in the role. Don't just guess: go through a structured process of job analysis or competency selection to find out.
2. Choose tools that demonstrably measure these attributes and that are reliable, fair and cost-effective. Don't choose tools just because you've always used them, or because they are new or fashionable, if you can't demonstrate their relevance to the job. Look at the evidence in this white paper and elsewhere to help you choose.
3. Put your selection tools together into a cost-effective selection process, so that the less expensive tools are used first (and therefore with more people) and the more expensive tools are used later (and therefore with fewer people). Don't forget to allow for hidden costs.
4. Over time, establish how effective your selection process is. Did you select people who were good at the job? What selection tools worked best? Use the results to further improve the process.

Getting it right pays real dividends. Better-performing staff will directly help the bottom line, and the financial benefits can be quantified. Organisations will also gain more motivated, more committed staff and an enhanced brand reputation. Compared with many of the projects that organisations put in place (implementing a new IT system, for example), the costs are small and the benefits huge.

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