

University of Salford

Business, Decision Making



University of Salford BSc Business and Management Studies Year 1, Semester 2, Assignment 1 ‘Interviews are often regarded as an imperfect tool for the selection of potential employees’. How might organisation address this? People Management 29394 Semester 2, 1, 500-word coursework essay assignment

Businesses constantly strive to employ new methods of obtaining, training and retaining qualified professionals. The trend of using face-to-face interviews, also known as temp-to-hire employment, is often regarded as an imperfect tool for the selection of potential and suitable employees. There are numbers of common mistakes which can lead to low validity decisions and choosing the wrong people for the current job. From the unknown motives that surround us, we select the ones to which we pay attention. Our choice is determined by our own experience, personality and motivation, and this process is known as perceptual selection. This mean that we concentrate on things we like and which are similar to our own interests and ignore other things we do not like and cannot except; and this may lead us into focusing on the inappropriate candidates and to miss the ones which are applicable for the job. There are many researches and assumptions about the validity of the interviews which is crucial for making the last decisions. Despite that interviews have number of errors they cannot be replaced as a selection method, and in relation to avoid these mistakes, the interviewer may choose to use supplementary techniques and methods, which are essential for the decision-making process, and will help for increasing the validity of the gathered information, and also may motivate the selected candidates to perform the given tasks better. The interview is a time in which the interviewer needs to make the

right decision about hiring the proper candidate. This means that the interviewer has to be aware for signs of his or her own bias, and to be as precise as possible in making the final decision. One of the most common mistakes, during interview, is called the halo effect versus the horns effect, which is related especially to avoid right after the candidate has entered the room. The halo effect may occur if the person makes the advantageous first impression immediately after the interview had started, he or she may have very confident manners and firm shake or just is well dressed and attractive, so thus the interviewer will be influenced more positively and will seek for more and more positive information about this particular candidate. Unlike the halo effect, there comes the horns effect, completely opposite to the other one: and it is about making an unfavourable first impression, so the interviewer will make almost instant decision that this candidate is completely inappropriate for the job and will seek only for the negative and contradictory information to confirm the first impression. Other common mistakes made by interviewers are: hiring people like oneself or having a stereotype. Interviewers are likely to hire people which are like them because of the inborn human tendency to identify other same like oneself. Finding someone like you does not mean that he or she is suitable for the same job, but it will make the interviewer to feel more comfortable around similar people. Second and one of the most dangerous of all perceptual decisions is having a stereotype, which is a “thought that may be adopted about specific types of individuals or certain ways of doing things”¹. There are numerous examples about stereotyping: all students are irresponsible, immature and lazy; or that men can do better the given job than women and so on. And

they are often equated to some form of unlawful discrimination, and having it may have the wrong impact on the final decision about the certain candidate. ----- 1 Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stereotype> Furthermore, other mistakes during interview may be: making snap decisions or assumptions. Sometimes interviewers make up their minds in the first five minutes right after meeting some candidates, and they do not change their image about the person's suitability. Assumptions, which are similar to stereotypes, are ideas or guesses that people hold to be true, without any stated reason for that. And they are often caused by making all the mentioned above mistakes or if inexperienced interviewers decide to make their own decisions based on their own personal view of how someone would act in certain circumstances. All of the mistakes made from the interviewers can lead to gathering irrelevant and insufficient information about a person, and even worst: making wrong final decision about hiring the inappropriate candidate for the job. But as I said at the beginning, for every mistake there is suitable solution. Being aware of making this exact mistake, the interviewer can try to avoid it and to gather more sufficient information about all of the candidates and to try not to decide early if the person is suitable or not for the position. Because even if the candidate has made poor impression at the beginning, giving him or her the opportunity to present themselves fully, can have extremely important influence about the final decision. One of the ways to diminish interviewer errors is to have structured interviews and to have more than one interviewer for the given position. First having a structured interview means that the interviewer will have a set of questions related to different tasks,

skills or personal qualities, which will help for deriving to more relevant information, and giving the opportunity to all candidates to answer the same questions will give similar profile for each on and will help for making the decision more easily at the end. The IRS (2007a) identified that almost 99 per cent of employers involve more than one interviewer for some of the posts, which can reduce the appearance of some of the mistakes. Also the people included in the selection process may vary from different organisations depending on various factors. According again to IRS (2007a), it is really important that the interviewers have particular skill for doing their job, so most of the employers are familiar with the need for training the people so they can do their duty successfully. Many researches show that, interviews are not able to provide sufficient information and to have high predictive validity, and it is easier for obtaining objective information from choosing different test, for example. Because interviews cannot be replaced as a selection method, it is good if interviewers choose supplementary selection techniques. But also it is really important that the additional methods are directly related to performance on the job. The interviewer can choose from different test and activities as: psychological tests, which can cover a various range of human characteristics as well as intelligence, motivation and personality: work samples, which will provide a good occasion for the interviewer to observe how the candidates have perform different tasks, their knowledge of the subject or adequacy of preparation: observation at work, references and many others, which can be used to complement the information gained from interviews. And lastly but not least, it is important that the candidate has received all the information about the

job, because he or she also need has decision to make about whether or not he or she wants to accept the offer. Thus they can be encouraged to ask as many questions as possible during the interview and will feel more motivated to accomplish the given tasks better than everyone else. In conclusion about, what are the main mistakes during interviews and how to avoid them, there are many little tricks that can be used in order to help sift the received information: one of them for example is to decide in advance which one or few of the supplement methods are going to be used for this particular interview: another one example is to try to ignore the tendency to focus on the last stage because thus, prior and important information may be forgotten. Also depending on how interviews are structured, they may be poor or potent predictors for future achievement of the given tasks. One more important example about avoiding mistakes is that the interviewers are appropriately trained and well place to judge the final decision. And never to forget that the main aim of the selection method is to select the most suitable and applicable candidate, which should be an accomplishment of the main goal: to collect as much relevant information as possible in order to predict high performance on the job. Bibliography: 1. Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stereotype> 2. Foot, M. and C. Hook (2008) *Introducing Human Resource Management*, Prentice Hall