

Employee resourcing and development essay sample

[Business](#), [Management](#)



introduction

In today's business environment, human resource is considered to be an organizations greatest resource; technology and capital are also needed but cannot be utilized with some form of human resource (Mathis and Jackson, 2010). All organizations want to have competitive advance and be successful, selecting and retaining the talented staff is the best way to achieve this. Best practices in the recruitment and selection process can to the achievement of organizational goals (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2012); it is one of the most important functions of human resource management. The focal objective of this essay is to show how psychometric testing and assessment centres help to make the selection process more effective in providing evidence of whether an applicant has the necessary skills and competencies needed to perform, by critically analysing existing literature on the topic.

The essay is structured into various sections, before we can talk about the effectiveness of these two variables, a definition of Human Resource Management, Human Resource Planning and Recruitment and Selection is needed. An understanding of the different methods of selection is also needed. Finally the use of Psychometric Testing and Assessment Centres in organization is examined; each section will define and outlines the purpose of the part and its importance.

human resource management & hr planning

In today's changing environment, jobs are no longer secure and the focus is now on employability rather than job for life, so employees need to be continually acquiring new skills. Armstrong (2009, p. 4) defines Human Resource Management as a strategic, integrated and coherent approach to the employment, development and well-being of people working in an organization. Human Resource Management entails the strategic decisions made by management in respect to their employees and how these decisions affect the overall relationship (Beer et al, 1984).

One important aspect of the Human Resource function is Human Resource Planning (Hwang and Kogan, 2003). To have a competitive edge, organizations need a strategic plan, Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010, p. 91) states that ' human resource planning is a strategic opportunity, contributes to strategic decisions and shapes the development of the organization'. Human Resource Planning can be defined as the forecasting of an organization's human resource needs and the planning that is required in achieving those needs (Armstrong, 2009).

The success of any organization comes down to the performance of the individuals hired. Achieving optimum use of the organizations most valuable resource is the main outcome of human resource planning (Mathis and Jackson, 2010). A key aspect of human resource planning is the recruitment and selection process; this is fundamental in matching the best candidates to the right job for organizational success (Sutherland and Wöcke, 2011).

recruitment: not just filling vacancies

Organizations in today's global economy are always looking to recruit and retain highly skilled employees. The most critical decisions organizations make is in the recruitment and selection of highly skilled employees (Sutherland and Jordaan, 1994). Recruitment is defined as attracting and engaging qualified applicants (within or outside of the organization) for existing vacancies (Absar, 2012). The recruiting of the right applicant is fundamental in maintaining competitive advantage and economies of scale for an organization. Role profiles are an integral part of the recruitment and process; it ultimately defines the purpose of the role and all its key areas (Armstrong, 2009). HR professionals must have the required skills and competencies in order to successfully recruit the right applicants.

The recruitment process goes through many stages; shortfalls in manpower are identified, vacancies are advertised, resumes are received and various selection methods are used to choose the right applicant. Diversity should always be taken into account when recruiting, any bias should be removed from the application process and the organization should make certain that recruiting personnel are aware of legislation on discrimination (CIPD, 2012). Recruiting applicants based on incomplete data or assumptions can seriously jeopardize organizational goals and objectives, hiring the wrong applicant can be very costly to the organization especially when these vacancies are for top management positions (Sangeetha, 2010). There are various methods of recruiting – internal applicants, those based on references or recruitment agencies. After the posting of job vacancies and a reasonable amount of applications has been received, the selection process begins.

the selection process: how it works

Proper human resource planning is the way to ensuring that the right applicants, who possess the necessary skills to achieve organizational objectives are selected (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010). Selection is the process of assessing an applicant's competency with the sole purpose of offering employment (Sutherland and Wöcke, 2011). Selection has two processes – shortlisting and assessment of the applicants shortlisted. A wide range of methods is used when assessing the suitability of an applicant for a current vacancy. The key issues regarding the selection process is how to ascertain performance and detect whether an applicant has the necessary competences, training and skills to perform the job and whether their personality fits in with the culture of the organization.

When choosing which applicant to hire management makes a discrimination decision based on ability and suitability, this decision however, should always be based valid information related to what is required to perform the job successfully, a fair approach to these discrimination decisions is seen as ethical and professional (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010).

methods of selection

Interviews are the most popular method of selection in most countries throughout the world. It entails face-to-face contact between the employer and future employee. Although the validity of the results of interviews has been questioned, there are barely any hires without the interview process; organizations see its usefulness in verifying data and 'selling' the

organizations' culture to the applicant (Martin, Whiting and Jackson, 2010). Applicants also use this opportunity to market themselves and showcase their personality. If interviews are not structured with pre-determined questions it can lead to biases and an unfair outcome for the applicant (Armstrong, 2009).

The Application form is another selection method which is highly utilized by most organizations. Its main purpose is to seek information relevant to the applicant's ability to perform the job (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010). The structuring of the application form is extremely important in order to make certain the right information is received. Assessment centres are widely used across the globe, by large and small organizations for the recruitment of various professions.

' Introduced in the 1950s by Bray and his associates at AT&T as an alternative to highly structured tests and unstructured interviews, assessment centres (Bray and Grant, 1966) have enjoyed increasing acceptance among over 2, 000 public and private sector organizations (Gangler et al., 1987)'. Assessment centres allows for the observation of applicants in work related situations, thereby allowing the employer to ascertain if the applicant has the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the job. Psychometric testing is done at assessment centres. Assessment centres use in human resource management extends to recruitment, selection, promotion and training and development.

Psychological testing is the process of using different techniques to ascertain an applicant's knowledge, capabilities, behaviour and personality, these test should never be performed in a vacuum (Armstrong, 2009). Psychometric testing is mainly used by larger organizations with established human resource departments. Psychometric testing involves all forms of psychological assessments, such as - attitude tests, intelligence tests, cognitive ability tests, personality tests. The main outcomes of these tests are to measure personalities and abilities (Martin, Whiting and Jackson, 2010).

the effectiveness of assessment centres and psychometric testing: can they add value to hr

The assessment centre (AC) can be perceived as the most effective method when it comes to recruitment and selection, it's a process whereby multiple selection techniques are used. According to (Russell, 1987) in assessment centres different types of simulations or tests (intelligence, cognitive ability, psychometric) to predict the applicant's behaviour in the work environment, whereby allowing the assessor to base his/her selection of those results.

The cost of assessment centres are considerably high and may only be undertaken in larger organizations. In research conducted by Randall, Cooke and Smith (2009) an assessment centre was created for the insurance industry, its design was such that the desired results were received by the minimal amount of supervision, thereby being extremely cost effective. The main objective was to measure the survival rate of participants in the

insurance industry for a period of 6 months; also feedback was given on various strengths and weaknesses of the participants so that training and development could be recommended.

The findings of this research showed that the assessment centre was successful in predicting which participants would survive in the insurance industry and those that would not. The design of the assessment centre, specifically job and competency analysis is the key to the identifying an applicant's behaviour and performance (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010). Some of the tests performed at assessment centres are psychometric tests.

Psychometrics is used by organizations to make effective decisions in the selection process, overall achieving organizational goals by selecting a quality workforce. They are measuring instruments of personality and intelligence. According to (Corcoran, 2005) an Occupational Personality Questionnaires (OPQ) was very successful in allowing the organization to choose the best fit for the job based on the individuals' personality.

Psychometric testing helps the selector be more objective in the selection process by focusing more on roles and what characteristics these roles require (Blythe, 2004). They also speed up the recruitment process, by pre-screening applicants, whereby the organization 'weeds out' undesirables and is allowed to focus their resources on the 'right' applicants.

Many organizations believe that the use of psychometric testing when appropriately administered enhances decision making, allowing managers to have a sound understanding of the intelligence and capabilities of the

applicant (Corcoran, 2005). There are many types of psychometrics tests that can be administered but the test should be in line with the job analysis, different methods of testing would be needed depending on the profession; e. g accountant/numerical cognitive ability test (Corcoran, 2005).

Psychometric test should be administered by a trained psychologist due to the fact that there is a huge potential for misinterpretation of the results (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010).

Whatever means of psychometric testing used it is wise for organizations to make sure the test are valid. For the present purpose, validity means that the results of the testing method used provides useful information on performance (Corcoran, 2005). Validity is the most important factor, it determines whether or not the method used to assess the applicant has accurately identified if they are suitable to perform the job. Mental ability is one of the best predictors of future performance, when combined with personality test and structured interviews the validity of the results increases (Wolf and Jenkins, 2006).

conclusion

In conclusion the research has shown that psychometric testing and assessment centres can greatly contribute to the selection process by determining whether an applicant has the desired skills and competencies necessary to perform the job by measuring their personality, cognitive ability and competencies. Once these methods are carried out using best practices, in addition to other methods of selection such as interviews and application

forms organizations will maintain competitive advantage and achieve their organizational goals by selecting the very best fit for the job.

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