

organization gets a chance to spread its brand name and a crack at hiring the best applicants, who have just proved themselves.⁷⁴

Computer Interaction Performance Tests Versus Paper-and-Pencil Tests. As with ability testing, the computer has made it possible to measure aspects of work that are not possible to measure with a paper-and-pencil test. The computer can capture the complex and dynamic nature of work. This is especially true in work where perceptual and motor performance are required.

An example of how the computer can be used to capture the dynamic nature of service work comes from Suntrust Bank. Suntrust has applicants perform some of the same tasks its tellers perform, such as looking up account information and entering customer data. The candidates' reactions to the scenarios, both mental (e.g., comprehension, coding, and calculation) and motor (e.g., typing speed and accuracy), are assessed.⁷⁵

Evaluation

Research indicates that performance or work sample tests have a high degree of validity in predicting job performance. One meta-analysis of a large number of studies suggested that the average validity was $\bar{r} = .54$ in predicting job performance.⁷⁶ Because performance tests measure the entire job and work samples measure part of the job, they also have a high degree of content validity. Thus, when one considers the high degree of empirical and content validity, work samples are perhaps the most valid method of selection for many types of jobs.

Performance tests and work samples have other advantages as well. Research indicates that these measures are widely accepted by applicants as being job related. One study found that no applicants complained about performance tests but that 10%–20% complained about other selection procedures.⁷⁷ A study of American workers in a Japanese automotive plant concluded that work sample tests are best able to accommodate cross-cultural values and therefore are well suited for selecting applicants in international joint ventures. Another possible advantage of performance tests and work samples is that they have low degrees of adverse impact, though some evidence suggests that they may have more adverse impact than is commonly thought.⁷⁸

Work samples do have several limitations. The costs of the realism embedded in work samples are high. The closer a predictor comes to simulating actual job performance, the more expensive it becomes to use it. Actually having people perform the job, as with an internship, may require paying a wage. Using videos and computers adds costs as well. As a result, performance tests and work samples are among the most expensive means of selecting workers; their costs are amplified when one considers the lack of generalizability of such measures. Probably more than any other selection method, performance tests and work samples are tied to the specific job at hand. This means that a different test, based on a thorough analysis of the job, will need to be developed for each job. While their validity may well