

The interview appears to have moderate adverse impact against minorities—more than personality tests but considerably less than cognitive ability tests.¹¹⁷

Structuring an interview requires that organizations follow a systematic and standardized process. For illustration purposes, we describe development of a situational interview.

Constructing a Structured Interview

The structured interview, by design and conduct, standardizes and controls for sources of influence on the interview process and the interviewer. The goal is to improve interview reliability and validity beyond that of the unstructured interview. Research shows that this goal can be achieved; doing so requires following each of these steps: consult the job requirements matrix; develop the selection plan; develop the structured interview plan; select and train interviewers; and evaluate effectiveness. Each of these steps is elaborated on next.

The Job Requirements Matrix and Selection Plan

The starting point for the structured interview is the job requirements matrix. It identifies the tasks and KSAOs that define the job requirements around which the structured interview is constructed and conducted.

Because the selection plan flows from the KSAOs identified in the job requirements matrix, it helps identify which KSAOs are necessary to assess during selection and whether the structured interview is the preferred method of assessing them.

Is the KSAO Necessary? The candidate must bring some KSAOs to the job, and others can be acquired on the job (through training and/or job experience). The bring-it/acquire-it decision must be made for each KSAO, and it should be guided by the importance indicator(s) for the KSAOs in the job requirements matrix.

Is the Structured Interview the Preferred Method? Several factors should be considered when determining whether the structured interview is the preferred method of assessing each KSAO necessary for selection. The structured interview is probably best suited for assessing the more interpersonal or face-to-face skills and abilities, such as communication and interpersonal skills.

An example of a selection plan for the job of sales associate in a retail clothing store is shown in Exhibit 9.10. While there were five task dimensions for the job in the job requirements matrix (customer service, use of machines, use of customer service outlets, sales and departmental procedures, and cleaning and maintenance), the selection plan shows only the dimension of customer service.

Note in the exhibit that the customer service dimension has several required KSAOs. However, only some of these will be assessed during selection, and only some of those will be assessed by the structured interview. The method of assessment is thus carefully targeted to the KSAO to be assessed.

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