

most appropriate for a given job without having to resort to a local validation study, as will be discussed in Chapter 7.

A task questionnaire is potentially limited in certain ways. The most important limitation pertains to task statement content. Care must be taken to ensure that the questionnaire contains task statements of sufficient content relevance, representativeness, and specificity. This suggests that if a tailor-made questionnaire is to be used, considerable time and resources must be devoted to its development to ensure accurate inclusion of task statements. If a preexisting questionnaire (e.g., the PAQ) is considered, prior to its use the task statement content should be assessed relative to the task content of the jobs to be analyzed.

A second limitation of task questionnaires pertains to potential respondent reactions. Respondents may react negatively if they feel the questionnaire does not contain task statements covering important aspects of their jobs. Respondents may also find completion of the questionnaire to be tedious and boring; this may cause them to commit rating errors. Interpretation and understanding of the task statements may also be problematic for respondents who have reading and comprehension skill deficiencies.

A third limitation is that questionnaires such as the PAQ assume that the incumbent is reasonably intelligent, experienced in the job, and sufficiently educated to evaluate the items. To the extent incumbents are less intelligent, lack experience, or have little education, the familiar dictum "garbage in, garbage out" may apply.

**Committee or Task Force.** Job analysis is often guided by an ad hoc committee or task force. Members of this group typically include job experts—both managers and employees—as well as an HR representative. They may conduct a number of activities, including (1) reviewing existing information and gathering sample job descriptions, (2) interviewing job incumbents and managers, (3) overseeing the administration of job analysis surveys and analyzing the results, (4) writing task statements, grouping them into task dimensions, and rating the importance of the task dimensions, and (5) identifying KSAs and rating their importance. A committee or task force brings considerable job analysis expertise to the process, facilitates reliability of judgment through conversation and consensus building, and enhances acceptance of the final results.

**Criteria for Choice of Methods.** Some explicit choices regarding methods of job analysis need to be made. One set of choices involves deciding whether to use a particular method of information collection. An organization must decide whether to use an off-the-shelf method or its own particular method that is suited to its own needs and circumstances. A second set of choices involves how to blend together a set of methods that will be used in varying ways and degrees in the actual job analysis. Some criteria for guidance in such decisions are shown in Exhibit 4.12. In practice, job analysis is usually conducted through a combination of these methods so that the weaknesses of any one method are offset by the strengths of another.