

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND INTRODUCTION

Learning Objectives

- Define measurement and understand its use and importance in staffing decisions
- Understand the concept of reliability and review the different ways reliability of measures can be assessed
- Define validity and consider the relationship between reliability and validity
- Compare and contrast the two types of validation studies typically conducted
- Consider how validity generalization affects and informs validation of measures in staffing
- Review the primary ways assessment data can be collected

Introduction

In staffing, measurement is a process used to gather and express information about people and jobs in numerical form. Measurement is critical to staffing because, as far as selection decisions are concerned, a selection decision can only be as effective as the measures on which it is based.

The first part of this chapter presents the process of measurement in staffing decisions. After showing the vital importance and uses of measurement in staffing activities, three key concepts are discussed. The first concept is that of measurement itself, along with the issues raised by it—standardization of measurement, levels of measurement, and the difference between objective and subjective measures. The second concept is that of scoring and how to express scores in ways that help in their interpretation. The final concept is that of correlations between scores, particularly as expressed by the correlation coefficient and its significance. Calculating correlations between scores is a very useful way to learn even more about the meaning of scores.

What is the quality of the measures used in staffing? How sound are they as indicators of the attributes being measured? Answers to these questions lie in the reliability and validity of the measures and the scores they yield. There are multiple ways of doing reliability and validity analysis; these methods are discussed in conjunction with numerous examples drawn from staffing situations. As these examples show, the quality of staffing decisions (e.g., who to hire or reject) depends heavily on the quality of measures and scores used as inputs to these decisions. Some organizations rely only on common staffing metrics and benchmarks—what leading organizations are doing—to measure effectiveness. Though benchmarks have their value, reliability and validity are the real keys in assessing the quality of selection measures.

An important practical concern involved in the process of measurement is the collection of assessment data. Decisions about testing procedures (who is qualified