

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the similarities and differences between personality tests and integrity tests. When is each warranted in the selection process?
2. How would you advise an organization considering adopting a cognitive ability test for selection?
3. Describe the structured interview. What are the characteristics of structured interviews that improve on the shortcomings of unstructured interviews?
4. What are the most common discretionary and contingent assessment methods? What are the similarities and differences between the use of these two methods?
5. What is the best way to collect and use drug-testing data in selection decisions?
6. How should organizations apply the general principles of the UGESP to practical selection decisions?

ETHICAL ISSUES

1. Do you think it's unethical for employers to select applicants on the basis of measures such as "Dislike loud music" and "Enjoy wild flights of fancy" even if the scales that such items measure have been shown to predict job performance? Explain.
2. Cognitive ability tests are one of the best predictors of job performance, yet they have substantial adverse impact against minorities. Do you think it's fair to use such tests? Why or why not?

APPLICATIONS

Assessment Methods for the Job of Human Resources Director

Nairduwel, Inoalot, and Imslo (NII) is a law firm specializing in business law. Among other areas, it deals in equal employment opportunity law, business litigation, and workplace torts. The firm has more than 50 partners and approximately 120 employees. It does business in three states and has law offices in two major metropolitan areas. The firm has no federal contracts.

NII plans to expand into two additional states with two major metropolitan areas. One of the primary challenges accompanying this ambitious expansion plan is how to staff, train, and compensate the individuals who will fill the positions in

the new offices. Accordingly, the firm wishes to hire an HR director to oversee the recruitment, selection, training, performance appraisal, and compensation activities accompanying the business expansion, as well as supervise the HR activities in the existing NII offices. The newly created job description for the HR director is listed in the accompanying exhibit.

The firm wishes to design and then use a selection system for assessing applicants that will achieve two objectives: (1) create a valid and useful system that will do a good job of matching applicant KSAOs to job requirements, and (2) be in compliance with all relevant federal and state employment laws.

The firm is considering numerous selection techniques for possible use. For each method listed below, decide whether you would or would not use it in the selection process and state why.

1. A job knowledge test specifically designed for HR professionals that focuses on an applicant's general knowledge of HR management
2. A medical examination and drug test at the beginning of the selection process in order to determine if applicants are able to cope with the high level of stress and frequent travel requirements of the job and are drug-free
3. A paper-and-pencil integrity test
4. A structured behavioral interview that would be specially designed for use in filling only this job
5. A general cognitive ability test
6. Personal Characteristics Inventory
7. A set of interview questions that the firm typically uses for filling any position:
 - a. Tell me about a problem you solved on a previous job.
 - b. Do you have any physical impairments that would make it difficult for you to travel on business?
 - c. Have you ever been tested for AIDS?
 - d. Are you currently unemployed, and if so, why?
 - e. This position requires fresh ideas and energy. Do you think you have those qualities?
 - f. What is your definition of success?
 - g. What kind of sports do you like?
 - h. How well do you work under pressure? Give me some examples.

Exhibit**Job Description for Human Resources Director****JOB SUMMARY**

Performs responsible administrative work managing personnel activities. Work involves responsibility for the planning and administration of HRM programs, including recruitment, selection, evaluation, appointment, promotion, compensation, and recommended change of status of employees, and a system of communication for disseminating information to workers. Works under general supervision, exercising initiative and independent judgment in the performance of assigned tasks.

TASKS

1. Participates in overall planning and policy making to provide effective and uniform personnel services.
2. Communicates policy through organization levels by bulletin, meetings, and personal contact.
3. Supervises recruitment and screening of job applicants to fill vacancies. Supervises interviewing of applicants, evaluation of qualifications, and classification of applications.
4. Supervises administration of tests to applicants.
5. Confers with supervisors on personnel matters, including placement problems, retention or release of probationary employees, transfers, demotions, and dismissals of permanent employees.
6. Initiates personnel training activities and coordinates these activities with work of officials and supervisors.
7. Establishes effective service rating system and trains unit supervisors in making employee evaluations.
8. Supervises maintenance of employee personnel files.
9. Supervises a group of employees directly and through subordinates.
10. Performs related work as assigned.

JOB SPECIFICATIONS

1. *Experience and Training*
Should have considerable experience in area of HRM administration. Six years minimum.
2. *Education*
Graduation from a four-year college or university, with major work in human resources, business administration, or industrial psychology. Master's degree in one of these areas is preferable.

3. *Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities*

Considerable knowledge of principles and practices of HRM, including staffing, compensation, training, and performance evaluation.

4. *Responsibility*

Supervises the human resource activities of six office managers, one clerk and one assistant.

Choosing Among Finalists for the Job of Human Resources Director

Assume that NII, after weighing its options, decided to use the following selection methods to assess applicants for the HR director job: résumé, cognitive ability test, job knowledge test, structured interview, and questions (f) and (g) from the list of generic interview questions.

NII advertised for the position extensively, and out of a pool of 23 initial applicants, it was able to come up with a list of three finalists. Shown in the accompanying exhibit are the results from the assessment of the three finalists using these selection methods. In addition, information from an earlier résumé screen was included for possible consideration. For each finalist, you are to decide whether you would be willing to hire the person and why.

Exhibit

Results of Assessment of Finalists for Human Resources Director Position

	Finalist 1— Lola Vega	Finalist 2— Sam Fein	Finalist 3— Shawanda Jackson
Résumé	GPA 3.9/Cornell University B.S. Human Resource Mgmt. 5 years' experience in HRM • 4 years in recruiting No supervisory experience	GPA 2.8/SUNY Binghamton B.B.A. Finance 20 years' experience in HRM • Numerous HR assignments • Certified HR professional 15 years' supervisory experience	GPA 3.2/Auburn University B.B.A. Business and English 8 years' experience in HRM • 3 years HR generalist • 4 years compensation analyst 5 years' supervisory experience

tial for a lawsuit. In response, many supervisors give problem employees unpleasant work tasks, reduce their working hours, or otherwise negatively modify their jobs in hopes that problem employees will simply quit. What are the ethical issues raised by this strategy?

APPLICATIONS

Managerial Turnover: A Problem?

HealthCareLaunderCare (HCLC) is a company that specializes in picking up, cleaning, and delivering all the laundry for health care providers, especially hospitals, nursing homes, and assisted-care facilities. Basically, these health care providers have outsourced their laundry operations to HCLC. In this very competitive business, a typical contract between HCLC and a health care provider is only two years, and HCLC experiences a contract nonrenewal rate of 10%. Most nonrenewals occur because of dissatisfaction with service costs and especially quality (e.g., surgical garb that is not completely sterilized).

HCLC has 20 laundry facilities throughout the country, mostly in large metropolitan areas. Each laundry facility is headed by a site manager, and there are unit supervisors for the intake, washing, drying, inspection and repair, and delivery areas. An average of 100 nonexempt employees are employed at each site.

The operation of the facilities is technologically sophisticated and very health- and safety-sensitive. In the intake area, for example, employees wear protective clothing, gloves, and eyewear because of all the blood, tissue, and germs on laundry that comes in. The washing area is composed of huge washers in 35-foot stainless steel tunnels with screws that move the laundry through various wash cycles. Workers in this area are exposed to high temperatures and must be proficient in the operation of the computer control systems. Laundry is lifted out of the tunnels by robots and moved to the drying room area, where it is dried, ironed, and folded by machines tended by employees. In the inspection and repair area, quality inspection and assurance occurs. Laundry is inspected for germs and pinholes (in the case of surgical garb—pinholes could allow blood and fluids to come into contact with the surgeon), and employees complete repairs on torn clothing and sheets. In the delivery area, the laundry is hermetically sealed in packages and placed in delivery vans for transport.

HCLC's vice president of operations, Tyrone Williams, manages the sites—and site and unit managers—with an iron fist. Mr. Williams monitors each site with a weekly report of a set of cost, quality, and safety indicators for each of the five areas. When he spots what he thinks are problems or undesirable trends, he has a conference call with both the site manager and the area supervisor. In the decidedly one-way conversation, marching orders are delivered and are expected to be fulfilled. If a turnaround in the “numbers” doesn't show up in the next weekly report,



Mr. Williams gives the manager and the supervisor one more week to improve. If sufficient improvement is not forthcoming, various punitive actions are taken, including base pay cuts, demotions, reassignments, and terminations. Mr. Williams feels such quick and harsh justice is necessary to keep HCLC competitive and to continually drive home to all employees the importance of working “by the numbers.” Fed up with this management system, many managers have opted to say “Bye-bye, numbers!” by leaving HCLC.

Recently, the issue of site and unit manager retention came up on the radar screen of HCLC’s president, Roman Dublinski. Mr. Dublinski glanced at a payroll report showing that 30 of the 120 site and unit managers had left HCLC in the past year, though no reasons for leaving were given. In addition, Mr. Dublinski had received copies of a few angry resignation letters written to Mr. Williams. Having never confronted or thought about possible employee retention problems or how to deal with them, Mr. Dublinski calls you (the corporate manager of staffing) to prepare a brief written analysis that will then be used as the basis for a meeting between the two of you and the vice president of HR, Debra Angle (Ms. Angle recommended this). Address the following questions in your report:

1. Is the loss of 30 managers out of 120 in one year cause for concern?
2. What additional data should be gathered to learn more about managerial turnover?
3. What are the costs of this turnover? Might there be any benefits?
4. Are there any lurking legal problems?
5. If retention is a serious problem for HCLC, what are the main ways we might address it?

Retention: Deciding to Act

Wally’s Wonder Wash (WWW) is a full-service, high-tech, high-touch car wash company owned solely by Wally Wheelspoke. Located in a midwestern city of 200,000 people (with another 100,000 in suburbs and more rural towns throughout the county), WWW currently has four facilities within the city. Wally plans to add four more facilities within the city in the next two years, and later on he plans to begin placing facilities in suburban locations and rural towns. Major competitors include two other full-service car washes (different owners), plus three touchless automatic facilities (same owner) in the city.

Wally’s critical strategy is to provide the very best to customers who want and relish extremely clean and “spiffy” vehicles and to have customers feel a positive experience each time they come to WWW. To do this, WWW seeks to provide high-quality car washes and car detailing and to generate considerable repeat business through competitive prices combined with attention to customers. To make itself accessible to customers, WWW is open seven days a week, 8:00 a.m. to