HRM Experience

Designing Selection Criteria and Methods

Making hiring decisions is important but difficult. Without good information, managers have almost no chance of making the right choice. They might as well be using an Ouija board. The process begins with a sound understanding of the job: the tasks, duties, and responsibilities associated with it and the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to do it. A job analysis should be done to make certain that all managers have assembled all of the information they need to ensure a good person–job fit. However, this information may not be enough. Other information about the company's values and philosophy are likely to be required to ensure that a good person–organization fit results.

Assignment

1. Working in teams of four to six individuals, choose a job with which you are familiar and identify the KSAOs needed to do it well.
2. Next, identify how you would evaluate candidates with these qualities. What tools would you use (applications, interviews, cognitive or ability tests, work samples, etc.) and why? Justify the cost and time required to conduct each.
3. After you have identified your selection criteria and methods, do a "reality check" in a real organization. Interview a manager who employs someone in that job. For example, if the job you selected is salesperson, go to a local business to learn how they select individuals for sales jobs. Compare what you thought would be a good selection approach with what you learned from the company you visited.
4. Identify the reasons for any discrepancies between your approach and theirs. Which approach do you think is better?

Case Study 1 Job Candidate Assessment Tests Go Virtual

A growing number of preemployment tests simulate a job's functions and are being conducted via computer or on the web. You can liken them to video games but within a work setting. Toyota, Starbucks, the paint maker Sherwin Williams, and numerous financial firms such as SunTrust Bank, KeyBank, and National City Bank have successfully used virtual job simulations to assess applicants.

At Toyota, applicants participating in simulations read dials and gauges, spot safety problems, and use their ability to solve problems as well as their general ability to learn as assessed. The candidates can see and hear about the job they're applying for from current Toyota employees. National City Bank has used virtual assessments to test call-center candidates and branch manager candidates. Call center candidates are given customer-service problems to solve, and branch manager candidates go through a simulation that assesses their ability to foster relationships with clients and make personnel decisions.

The virtual assessments tools, which are produced by companies such as Shaker Consulting Group, Profiles International, and others do not come cheap. But although they can cost tens of thousands of dollars, larger companies that can afford them are saying they are worth it. The benefits? Better qualified candidates, faster recruiting, and lower turnover among employees hired. KeyBank says that by using virtual testing tools, it realized savings of more than $1.75 million per year due to lower turnover.

Candidates also seem to like the assessments because they provide a more realistic job preview and make them feel like they are being chosen for jobs on more than just their personalities or how they performed during an interview. "It was a very insightful experience that made you think about what exactly you like and dislike in the workplace and if you really enjoy helping customers and have patience to do so," says one candidate tested for a customer service job.