

- We share a document, called a Dimension of Performance, which provides detailed examples of the kinds of behavior expected of Outbackers and how those behaviors are tied to the vision of Outback. This is a candidate's first exposure to our vision. (At this point, some candidates have withdrawn from the process because these dimensions set a very high standard.)
- When candidates agree to move forward in the process, they are asked to complete an application. The information they provide is reviewed with an eye toward determining if the candidate can perform the job, fit into the Outback culture, and stay with the company.
- Successful applicants are assessed for their cognitive ability, personality, and judgment through a series of tests that have been validated against existing Outbackers who have been successful in the company.
- Applicants who pass these tests are interviewed using questions that probe not only their experience but also their orientation toward aspects of the Outback culture, including service mindedness, hospitality, teamwork, and ability to think on their feet.

QUESTIONS

1. How do the employee selection methods at Outback Steakhouse help achieve competitive advantage?
2. How important is organization fit for Outback Steakhouse?
3. Why does Outback Steakhouse order the selection methods such that applicants first complete an application, then complete tests, and then participate in an interview?
4. Why do you think these selection methods are valid?

Source: Tom DeCotiss, Chris Sullivan, David Hyatt, and Paul Avery, "How Outback Steakhouse Created a Great Place to Work, Have Fun, and Make Money," *Journal of Organizational Excellence* (Autumn 2004): 23–33. Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

DISCUSSION CASE

Stringtown Iron Works

Stringtown Iron Works is a small fictional shipyard on the East Coast dedicated to ship overhaul. It focuses on obtaining government contracts for overhauling naval ships. These overhauls require Stringtown to maintain a quality workforce that is capable of rapid production. The position of pipe fitter is particularly critical for success.

Pipe fitters are responsible for repairing and installing the piping systems on board the vessels. Employees in the pipe fitter classification may also be called on to work in the shop building pipe pieces that are ultimately installed on the ships. Like most union jobs in the yard, pipe fitters are predominantly white males between the ages of 30 and 45. As part of the most recent bargaining agreement, work is primarily done in cross-functional teams.

Job Description

Job: Pipe fitter

Pay: \$12.00 to \$20.00 per hour

A pipe fitter must:

1. Read and interpret blueprints and/or sketches to fabricate and install pipe in accordance with specifications.
2. Perform joint preparation and fit-up to fabricate and install brazed and welded piping systems.
3. Perform layout and calculations to fabricate and install pipe.
4. Fabricate pipe pieces up to 10" in diameter and up to 10' long to support shipboard pipe installation.
5. Install ship's piping, such as water, drains, hydraulics, lube oil, fuel oil, high temperature air, etc. on location and within tolerances per design.
6. Inspect and hydro test completed piping systems to ensure compliance with ship's specifications.
7. Use a variety of hand and power tools to perform joint preparation, assembly bolt-up, and positioning during fabrication and installation.
8. Utilize welding equipment to tack-weld pipe joints and to secure pipe supports to ship's structure.

Completion of the above tasks requires pipe fitters to do the following:

- Frequent lifting and carrying of 25–50 pounds
- Occasional lifting and carrying of over 50 pounds
- Occasional to frequent crawling, kneeling, and stair climbing
- Frequent pushing, pulling, hammering, and reaching
- Frequent bending, stooping, squatting, and crouching
- Occasional twisting in awkward positions
- Occasional fume exposure

QUESTIONS

1. Which of the overall HR strategies would be best for Stringtown Iron Works?
2. Should Stringtown focus on job fit or organization fit?
3. Should Stringtown hire based on achievement or potential?
4. What selection methods would you recommend for Stringtown? Why?

**EXPERIENTIAL
EXERCISE**

Learning through interviewing

Interview a family member, friend, or someone else who has a job you would like to someday have. Learn about the hiring practices of the organization where this person works. Ask questions like the following:

1. What makes the company different from its competitors? Does it focus mostly on reducing costs, or does it try to provide goods and services that are somehow better than what competitors offer?
2. What tasks do you do on the job? What knowledge, skills, and abilities do you need in order to do this job effectively?
3. How long do most people stay at the company? Is this a place where most people work for their entire career? How long do you think you will continue working with the company?
4. What did you have to do to get hired at the company? Did you take any tests? Did they ask for a résumé? What was the interview like?
5. What type of qualifications do you think are most important for someone who wants to work at your company? If you were making a decision to hire someone to work with you, what characteristics would you want that person to