

COURSE: PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

LECTURE 6: SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

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Lecture learning outcomes:

At the end of the lecture you will be able to:

- a) Understand and define selection and its process.
- b) Discuss the selection process so as to make it effective.
- c) Explain how the final selection decision is made.
- d) Examine placement and orientation.

SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

Human resource selection is the process of choosing qualified individuals who are available to fill positions in an organization. In the ideal personnel situation, selection involves choosing the best applicant to fill a position. Selection is the process of choosing people by obtaining and assessing information about the applicants with a view to matching these with the job requirements. It involves a careful screening and testing of candidates who have put in their applications for any job in the organization. It is the process of choosing the most suitable persons out of all the applicants. The purpose of selection is to pick up the right person for every job.

It can be conceptualised in terms of either choosing the fit candidates, or rejecting the unfit candidates, or a combination of both. Selection involves both because it picks up the fits and rejects the unfits. There are more candidates who are rejected than those who are selected in most of the selection processes. Therefore, sometimes, it is called a negative process in contrast to positive programme of recruitment.

Selection involves screening or evaluation of applicants to identify those who are best-suited to perform the jobs which have fallen vacant in an organisation. It divides the candidates who offer themselves for appointment into two categories, namely those who will be employed and those who will not be employed. It is the process of rejecting unsuitable candidates to choose the few suitable applicants. Therefore, selection is frequently described as a negative process as compared to the positive process of recruitment. Under selection, the qualifications and experience of every candidate are compared with job requirements and with those of other candidates. The basic purpose of selection is to choose the right type of candidates to fill up vacancies in the organisation. Selection involves the matching of the qualities of candidates with the requirements of a job.

According to Dale Yoder, "Selection is the process in which candidates for employment are divided into two classes-those who are to be offered employment and those who are not".

According to Thomas Stone, "Selection is the process of differentiating between applicants in order to identify (and hire) those with a greater likelihood of success in a job".

In the words of Michael Jucius, "The selection procedure is the system of functions and devices adopted in a given company for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not candidates possess the qualifications called for by a specific job or for progression through a series of jobs."

According to Keith Davis, “Selection is the process by which an organisation chooses from a list of screened applicants, the person or persons who best meet the selection criteria for the position available.”

Thus, the selection process is a tool in the hands of management to differentiate between the qualified and unqualified applicants by applying various techniques such as interviews, tests etc. The cost incurred in recruiting and selecting any new employee is expensive. The cost of selecting people who are inadequate performers or who leave the organisation before contributing to profits proves a major cost of doing business. Decenzo and Robbins write, “Proper selection of personnel is obviously an area where effectiveness - choosing competent workers who perform well in their position-can result in large saving.” According to them, selection has two objectives:

- (1) to predict which job applicants would be successful if hired and
- (2) to inform and sell the candidate on the job and the organization.

Satisfaction of employee needs and wants as well as the fullest development of potential are important objectives of selection.

Dale Yoder says, “Selection has long held a high rank in the priority of problem areas in management. Investments in good people produce a very high rate of return. A good choice of people can provide a basis for long, sustained contributions.”

Difference between Recruitment and Selection: Difference between recruitment and selection has been described by Flippo as, “Recruitment is a process of searching for prospective employees and stimulating and encouraging them to apply for jobs in an organisation. It is often termed positive as it stimulates people to apply for jobs, selection on the other hand tends to be negative because it rejects a good number of those who apply, leaving only the best to be hired.”

Selection of candidates begins where recruitment ends. i.e. only after adequate number of applicants is secured through different sources of recruitment. Selection is a process of choosing a few among those who have been attracted. In selection, the organisation is moving towards actual placement on job. According to yoder, “The selection process is of one or many go, no-go, gauges. Candidates are screened by the application of these tools. Qualified applicants go on the next step, while the unqualified applicants are eliminated. Selection process is a series of steps, for securing relevant information about an applicant. At each step more is learn about the applicant. The purpose of selection process is to determine whether an applicant meets the qualification for specific job and to choose an applicant who is the most likely to perform well in that job.

Recruitment and selection differs in following manner:

1. **Difference in Objective:** The basic objective of recruitment is to attract maximum number of candidates so that more options are available. The basic objective of selection is to choose best out of the available candidates.
2. **Difference in Process:** Recruitment adopts the process of creating application pool as large as possible and therefore. It is known as positive process. Selection adopts the process through which more and more candidates are rejected and fewer candidates are selected or

sometimes even not a single candidate is selected. Therefore, it is known as negative process or rejection process.

3. **Technical Differences:** Recruitment techniques are not very intensive, and not require high skills. As against this, in selection process, highly specialised techniques are required. Therefore, in the selection process, only personnel with specific skills like expertise in using selection tests, conducting interviews, etc., are involved.
4. **Difference in Outcomes:** The outcome of recruitment is application pool which becomes input for selection process. The outcome of selection process is in the form of finalising candidates who will be offered jobs.

Significance of Selection

Selection of employees is very important because the costs of induction and training have increased and it is very difficult to terminate the services of an employee once is confirmed on the job. If the right type of persons are not selected, the employer will have to suffer a huge loss in terms of quantity and quality of work. Selection of employees must be done very carefully because mistakes in selection may prove to be very costly later on. If the selection function is not performed efficiently, labour absenteeism and turnover will be high. If unsuitable candidates are employed, the efficiency of the organization will go down. Such persons will be frequently absent from work and they will shirk their jobs. Very often, unsuitable employees have to leave the organization. This result in waste of time, energy and money spent on hiring and training such employees.

Proper selection and placement of employees will go a long way towards building up a stable workforce and eventually reducing labour costs. When selected personnel are suitable to the job, efficiency and productivity is high. Such personnel have high job satisfaction and high morale. Therefore, rates of absenteeism and labour turnover becomes low.

Basic Elements in the Selection Process

The selection process pulls together organizational goals, job designs, and performance appraisals, as well as recruitment and selection.

The first element in the selection process is the setting of organizational goals, which must include the general hiring policy of the organization. Management can either employ the best people in the marketplace for particular jobs – often incurring high individual salaries and benefits or pay relatively low wages and salaries, unconcerned with employee turnover or dissatisfaction about wages, benefits, and working conditions. Policy makers must determine how the employees fit into the overall framework of the organization and must establish the relationship among the employees in the organization.

The second element, job design, involves determining what duties and responsibilities each job will entail. How motivating or repetitious a job is greatly affects the performance of employees on that job. The performance of employees affected by ability and motivation. The job design is affected by both of these factors.

The third element involves the measurement of job success. The discovery of what kind of employees are successful determine what kind of employees to recruit and select in the future.

The fourth element, job specifications, comes from the job analysis, which specifies what traits, skills, and background an individual must have to qualify for the job.

Finally, policy makers must determine which combination of interviews, tests, or other selection devices to use in the selection process. There is no magical combination of selection instruments that will minimize the cost of selection and facilitate choosing the best candidates available.

Selection Procedure

The selection procedure is concerned with securing relevant information about an applicant. This information is secured in a number of steps or stages. The objective of selection process is to determine whether an applicant meets the qualification for a specific job and to choose the applicant who is most likely to perform well in that job. Selection is a long process, commencing from the preliminary interview of the applicants and ending with the contract of employment.

The major factors which determine the steps involved in a selection process are as follows:

- Selection process depends on the number of candidates that are available for selection.
- Selection process depends on the sources of recruitment and the method that is adopted for making contact with the prospective candidates.
- Various steps involved in a selection process depend on the type of personnel to be selected.

Steps in selection process

1. Application Pool: Application pool built-up through recruitment process is the base for selection process. The basic objective at the recruitment level is to attract as much worthwhile applications as possible so that there are more options available at the selection stage.

2. Preliminary Screening and Interview: It is highly noneconomic to administer and handle all the applicants. It is advantageous to sort out unsuitable applicants before using the further selection steps. For this purpose, usually, preliminary interviews, application blank lists and short test can be used. All applications received are scrutinised by the personnel department in order to eliminate those applicants who do not fulfil required qualifications or work experience or technical skill, his application will not be entertained. Such candidate will be informed of his rejection.

Preliminary interview is a sorting process in which the prospective candidates are given the necessary information about the nature of the job and the organisation. Necessary information is obtained from the candidates about their education, skills, experience, expected salary etc. If the candidate is found suitable, he is elected for further screening. This courtesy interview; as it is often called helps the department screen out obvious misfits. Preliminary interview saves time and efforts of both the company and the candidate. It avoids unnecessary waiting for the rejected candidates and waste of money on further processing of an unsuitable candidate. Since rejection rate is high at preliminary interview, the interviewer should be kind, courteous, receptive and informal.

3. Application Blank or Application Form: An application blank is a traditional widely accepted device for getting information from a prospective applicant which will enable the management to make a proper selection. The blank provides preliminary information as well as aid in the interview by indicating areas of interest and discussion. It is a good means of quickly collecting verifiable (and therefore fairly accurate) basic historical data from the candidate. It also serves as a convenient device for circulating information about the applicant to appropriate members of management and as a useful device for storing information for, later reference. Many types of application forms, sometimes very long and comprehensive and sometimes brief, are used. Information is generally taken on the following items:

(a) Biographical Data: Name, father's name, date and place of birth, age, sex, nationality, height, weight, identification marks, physical disability, if any, marital status, and number of dependents.

(b) Educational Attainment: Education (subjects offered and grades secured), training acquired in special fields and knowledge gained from professional/technical institutes or through correspondence courses.

(c) Work Experience: Previous experience, the number of jobs held with the same or other employers, including the nature of duties, and responsibilities and the duration of various assignments, salary received, grades, and reasons for leaving the present employer.

(d) Salary and Benefits: Present and expected.

(e) Other Items: Names and addresses of previous employers, references, etc. An application blank is a brief history sheet of an employee's background and can be used for future reference, in case needed.

The application blank must be designed from the viewpoint of the applicant as well as with the company's purpose in mind. It should be relatively easy to handle in the employment office. Application form helps to serve many functions like:

Its main usefulness is to provide information for reference checking, good interviewing, and correlation with testing data.

- It helps to weed out candidates who are lacking in education, experience or some other eligibility traits.
- It helps in formulating questions to be asked in the interview.
- Data contained in application form can be stored for future reference.
- It also tests the candidate's ability to write, to organize his thoughts, and to present facts clearly and succinctly.
- It indicates further whether the applicant has consistently progressed to better jobs. It provides factual information.

4. Weighted Application Blanks

Some organisations assign numeric values or weights to the responses provided by the applicants. This makes the application form more job related. Generally, the items that have a strong relationship to job performance are given higher scores. For example, for a sales representative's position, items such as previous selling experience, area of specialisation, commission earned, religion, language etc. The total score of each applicant is then obtained by adding the weights of the individual item responses. The resulting scores are then used in the final selection. WAB is best suited for jobs where there are many employees especially for sales and technical jobs. It can help in reducing the employee turnover later on. However, there are several problems associated with WAB e.g.

- It takes time to develop such a form.
- The WAB would have to be updated every few years to ensure that the factors previously identified are still valid products of job success.
- The organisation should be careful not to depend on weights of a few items while finally selecting the employee.

5. Selection Tests: Many organisations hold different kinds of selection tests to know more about the candidates or to reject the candidates who cannot be called for interview etc. Selection tests normally supplement the information provided in the application forms. Such forms may contain

factual information about candidates. Selection tests may give information about aptitude, interest, personality, which cannot be known by application forms. Types of tests and rules of good of testing have been discussed in brief below:

- a. **Aptitude Tests:** These measure whether an individual has the capacity or talent ability to learn a given job if given adequate training. These are more useful for clerical and trade positions.
- b. **Personality Tests:** At times, personality affects job performance. These determine personality traits of the candidate such as cooperativeness, emotional balance etc. These seek to assess an individual's motivation, adjustment to the stresses of everyday life, capacity for interpersonal relations and self-image.
- c. **Interest Tests:** These determine the applicant's interests. The applicant is asked whether he likes, dislikes, or is indifferent to many examples of school subjects, occupations, amusements etc
- d. **Performance Tests:** In this test the applicant is asked to demonstrate his ability to do the job. For example, prospective typists are asked to type several pages with speed and accuracy.
- e. **Intelligence Tests:** This aim at testing the mental capacity of a person with respect to reasoning, word fluency, numbers, memory, comprehension, picture arrangement, etc. It measures the ability to grasp, understand and to make judgement.
- f. **Knowledge Tests:** These are devised to measure the depth of the knowledge and proficiency in certain skills already achieved by the applicants such as engineering, accounting etc.
- g. **Achievement Tests:** Whereas aptitude is a capacity to learn in the future, achievement is concerned with what one has accomplished. When applicants claim to know something, an achievement test is given to measure how well they know it.
- h. **Projective Tests:** In these tests the applicant projects his personality into free responses about pictures shown to him which are ambiguous.

Rules of Good Testing

- Norms should be developed for each test. Their validity and reliability for a given purpose should be established before they are used.
- Adequate time and resources must be provided to design, validate, and check tests.
- Tests should be designed and administered only by trained and competent persons.
- The user of tests must be extremely sensitive to the feelings of people about tests.
- Tests are to be used as a screening device.
- Reliance should not be placed solely upon tests in reaching decisions.
- Tests should minimize the probabilities of getting distorted results. They must be 'race-free'.
- Tests scores are not precise measures. They must be assigned a proper weightage.

6. Interview: An interview is a procedure designed to get information from a person and to assess his potential for the job he is being considered on the basis of oral responses by the applicant to oral inquiries by the interviewer. Interviewer does a formal in-depth conversation with the applicant, to evaluate his suitability. It is one of the most important tools in the selection process. This tool is used when interviewing skilled, technical, professional and even managerial employees. It involves two-way exchange of information.

The interviewer learns about the applicant and the candidate learns about the employer.

Objectives of Interviews: Interview helps:

- To obtain additional information from the candidate.
 - Facilitates giving the candidate information about the job, company, its policies, products etc.
 - To assess the basic suitability of the candidate. The selection interview can be:
 - One to one between the candidate and the interviewer:
 - Two or more interviewers by employers representatives-sequential;
 - By a panel of selections, i.e., by more than representative of the employer.
- The sequential interview involves a series of interviews; each interviewer meeting the candidate separately. The panel interview consists of two or more interviews meeting the candidate together.

Principles of Interviewing

To make it effective, an interview should be properly planned and conducted on certain principles; Edwin B. Flippo has described certain rules and principles of good interviewing to this end:

- Provide proper surroundings. The physical setting for the interview should be both private and comfortable.
- The mental setting should be one of rapport. The interviewer must be aware of non-verbal behaviour.
- Plan for the interview by thoroughly reviewing job specifications and job descriptions.
- Determine the specific objectives and the method of the interviewing.
- Inform yourself as much as possible concerning the known information about the interviewee.
- The interviewer should possess and demonstrate a basic liking and respect for people.
- Questions should be asked in a manner that encourages the interviewee to talk. Put the applicant at ease.
- Make a decision only when all the data and information are available. Avoid decisions that are based on first impressions.
- Conclude the interview tactfully, making sure that the candidate leaves feeling neither too elated nor frustrated.
- Maintain some written record of the interview during or immediately after it.
- Listen attentively and, if possible, protectively.

Questions must be stated clearly to avoid confusion and ambiguity. Maintain a balance between open and overtly structured questions.

- Body language' must not be ignored.
- The interviewer should make some overt sign to indicate the end of the interview.

Interviewing is largely an art, the application of which can be improved through practice.

Background Investigation: The next step in the selection process is to undertake an investigation of those applicants who appear to offer potential as employees. This may include contacting former employers to confirm the candidate's work record and to obtain their appraisal of his or her performance/ contacting other job-related and personal references, and verifying the educational accomplishments shown on the application.

The background investigation has major implications. Every personnel administrator has the responsibility to investigate each potential applicant. In some organization, failure to do so could result in the loss of his or her job. But many managers consider the background investigation data highly biased. Who would actually list a reference that would not give anything but the best possible recommendation? The seasoned personnel administrator expects this and delves deeper

into the candidate's background, but that, too, may not prove to be beneficial. Many past employers are reluctant to give any information to another company other than factual information (e.g., date of employment).

Even though there is some reluctance to give this information, there are ways in which personnel administrators can obtain it. Sometimes, for instance information can be obtained from references once removed. For example, the personnel administrator can ask a reference whose name has been provided on the application form to give another reference, someone who has knowledge of the candidate's work experience. By doing this, the administrator can eliminate the possibility of accepting an individual based on the employee's current employer's glowing recommendation when the motivation for such a positive recommendation was to get rid of the employee.

Physical Examination: After the selection decision and before the job offer is made, the candidate is required to undergo physical fitness test. Candidates are sent for physical examination either to the company's physician or to a medical officer approved for the purpose. Such physical examination provides the following information.

- Whether the candidate's physical measurements are in accordance with job requirements or not?
- Whether the candidate suffers from bad health which should be corrected?
- Whether the candidate has health problems or psychological attitudes likely to interfere with work efficiency or future attendance?
- Whether the candidate is physically fit for the specific job or not?

Policy on these physical exams has changed today. Dale Yoder writes, "Modern policy used the physical examination not to eliminate applicants, but to discover what jobs they are qualified to fill. The examination should disclose the physical characteristics of the individual that are significant from the standpoint of his efficient performance of the job he may enter or of those jobs to which he may reasonably expect to be transferred or promoted. It should note deficiencies, not as a basis for rejection, but as indicating restrictions on his transfer to various positions also."

Approval by Appropriate Authority: On the basis of the above steps, suitable candidates are recommended for selection by the selection committee or personnel department. Though such a committee or personnel department may have authority to select the candidates finally, often it has staff authority to recommend the candidates for selection to the appropriate authority. Organisations may designate the various authorities for approval of final selection of candidates for different categories of candidates. Thus, for top level managers, board of directors may be approving authority; for lower levels, even functional heads concerned may be approving authority.

Final Employment Decision: After a candidate is finally selected, the human resource department recommends his name for employment. The management or board of the company offers employment in the form of an appointment letter mentioning the post, the rank, the salary grade, the date by which the candidate should join and other terms and conditions of employment. Some firms make a contract of service on judicial paper. Usually an appointment is made on probation in the beginning. The probation period may range from three months to two years. When the work and conduct of the employee is found satisfactory, he may be confirmed. The personnel department prepare a waiting list and informs the candidates. In case a person does not join after being selected, the company calls next person on the waiting list.

Evaluation: The selection process, if properly performed, will ensure availability of competent and committed personnel. A period audit, conducted by people who work independently of the human resource department, will evaluate the effectiveness of the selection process. The auditors will do a thorough and the intensive analysis and evaluate the employment programme.

Selection Techniques

These techniques are typically referred to as predictors because they help in distinguishing between 'good' and 'poor' workers by predicting the future job success. Following are some common selection techniques:

1. Initial Screening: The initial screening and/or preliminary interview is undertaken to limit the costs of selection by letting only suitable candidates go through the further stages in selection. At this stage, usually a junior executive either screens all enquiries for positions against specified norms (in terms of age, qualifications and experience) through preliminary interview where information is exchanged about the job, the applicant and the mutual expectations of the individual and the organization. If the organization finds the candidate suitable, an application form, prescribed for the purpose, is given to these candidates to fill.

2. Application Form: The application form is usually designed to obtain information on various aspects of the applicant's social, demographic, academic and work-related background and references. The forms may vary for different positions. Some organizations may not have any form specially designed, and instead ask the candidates to write applications on a plain sheet.

It is important to determine what kind of information can and needs to be asked. It is equally important to know that asking for certain types of information relating to race, caste, religion and place of birth may be regarded as evidence of possible discrimination in the selection process.

The application form should provide all the basic information an organization needs to determine whether a candidate can be considered for the position he/she is applying for and also to provide the inputs to start the interview. It also serves as the basis to screen and reject candidates if they do not meet the eligibility criteria relating to qualifications, experience, etc.

3. Employment Tests: A test is a sample of an aspect of an individual's behaviour, performance or attitude. It also provides a systematic basis for comparing the behaviour, performance or attitude of two or more persons. Tests serve as a screening device and provide supplementary inputs in selection decisions. Their value lies in the fact that they serve as additional predictors intended to make selection decisions more apt and- accurate. Several types of tests are used in the selection of personnel. Some of the employment tests are discussed below:

(a) Intelligence Tests: These are tests to measure one's intelligence or qualities of understanding. They are also referred to as tests of mental ability. The traits of intelligence measured include: reasoning, verbal and non-verbal fluency, comprehension, numerical, memory and spatial relations ability.

The major criticism against these tests is that they tend to discriminate against rural people. Also, since most of these tests are administered in English, the results may be more influenced by one's command over language (particularly the lack of it) rather than one's intelligence.

(b) Aptitude tests: Aptitude refers to one's natural propensity or talent or ability to acquire a particular skill. While intelligence is a general trait, aptitude refers to a more specific capacity or potential. It could relate to mechanical dexterity, clerical, linguistic, musical, academic, etc.

Most aptitude tests are so standardized that they are not specific to any particular job. However, they are general enough to be used in different job situations. Certain types of aptitude tests called psychomotor tests measure hand and eye coordination and manipulative skills. There are other

types of aptitude tests to measure personal (how to decide for themselves appropriately in time) and interpersonal (social relations) competence.

(c) Achievement tests: These are proficiency tests to measure one's skill or acquired knowledge. The paper and pencil tests may seek to test a person's knowledge about a particular subject. But there is no guarantee that a person who knows most also performs best. Work sample tests or performance tests using actual task and working conditions (than simulated one's) provide standardized measures of behaviour to assess the ability to perform than merely the ability to know. Work sample tests are most appropriate for testing abilities in such skills as typing, stenography and technical trades. Work sample tests bear demonstrable relationship between test content and job performance.

(d) Personality, Interests, Preferences (PIP) Tests: PIP tests are those which seek to measure one's personality, interests and preferences. These tests are designed to understand the relationship between anyone of these and certain types of jobs.

Tests of one's personality traits or characteristics are sometimes referred to as personality inventories. These tests help evaluate characteristics such as maturity, sociability, objectivity, etc. Unlike tests, however, inventories do not have right or wrong answers. Personality inventories aid in selection decisions and are used for associating certain set of traits with salespersons and certain others, say, research and development personnel.

Interest tests are inventories' of likes and dislikes of people towards occupations, hobbies, etc. These tests help indicate which occupations (e.g. artistic, literary, technical, scientific, etc.) are more in tune with a person's interests.

Preference tests seek to match employee preferences with job and organizational characteristics.

(e) Projective Tests: These tests expect the candidates to interpret problems or situations. Responses to stimuli will be based on the individual's values, beliefs and motives. Thematic Apperception Test is example of projective tests. In Thematic Apperception Test a set of photographs are shown to the candidate who is then asked to write a story on each paragraph. The test administrator will draw inferences about the candidate's values, beliefs and motives from analysis of these stories. The main criticism against such tests is that they could be unscientific and reveal the personality of the test designer/administrator more than the candidate/applicant.

(f) Other tests: A wide variety of other tests also are used, though less frequently and in rare instances. These include graphology (handwriting analysis), non-verbal communication tests (gestures, body movement, eye-contact, etc.) and lie-detector tests. Most of these tests, with the possible exception of nonverbal communication tests, are designed more to identify the negative aspects in the personality, behaviour and attitudes of a person. In the Indian context, it was found in a handful of cases, employers who have an ardent zeal for having their management practices rooted in 'tradition and culture', use horoscope, face reading and palmistry (hand-reading). They contend that if the person is destined to succeed he should be selected so that he will not only do good to himself but also to the organization'. They add that "traditionally marital alliances are made this way; so we can select our employees the same way and expect them to have a life-long association with us". But, these kinds of tests are indeed very exceptional and rather unusual by the general standards. The following could be considered as the thumb rules of selection tests:

- a) Tests are to be used as a screening device.
- b) Tests scores are not precise measures. Use tests as supplements than on stand alone basis. Each test can be assigned a weightage.
- c) Norms have to be developed for each test; and their validity and reliability for a given purpose is to be established before they are used.
- d) Tests are better at predicting failure than success.
- e) Tests should be designed, administered, assessed and interpreted only by trained and competent persons.

4. Employment Interview: Interview is an oral examination of candidates for employment. No selection process is complete without one or more interviews. Interview is the most common and core method of both obtaining information from job-seekers, and decision-making on their suitability or otherwise. Organizations may seek to make their selection process as objective as possible. But, interview, which is an essential element of the process, by and large, still remains subjective.

Interviews usually take place at two crucial stages in the selection process, i.e. at the beginning and in the end. Interviews can differ in terms of their focus and format. Usually several individuals interview one applicant. This is called panel interview. Such panels usually consist of representatives from personnel department and concerned operating units/line functions. The interviews can be structured or unstructured, general or in-depth.

It helps to serve several purposes. First, interview provides additional information about the candidate. Secondly, face-to-face conversation helps in judging the suitability of the candidate. Thirdly, interview serves as a check on the information obtained through application blank and tests. Fourthly, interview may be used to give detailed information about the job and the organization. Fifthly, an in person meeting between the candidate and the interview board can be used for exploring the candidates' aptitude and capabilities.

However, employment interview suffers from some limitations: (a) interview involves much expenditure of time and money; (b) interview can test only the personality of the candidate and not his skill and bias of the interviewers; (c) interviewers may not be experts and may fail to extract all relevant information from the candidate.

Interviewing is both an art and a science. The effectiveness of the interview as a screening device can be improved by taking care of certain aspects like the following:

The interview should be based on a checklist of what to look for in a candidate. Such a checklist could be based on proper job analysis. Each critical attribute which the interview seeks to evaluate may be assigned a specific weightage.

It is desirable to prepare a specific set of guidelines for the interview. The interviewee objectively. Also, all interviewers need to develop common understanding about the criteria measures, their purposes and weightage. The interviewers may use past behaviour to predict future behaviours and obtain additional information to attempt such linkages more meaningfully. There should be proper coordination between the initial and succeeding interview. The interview should be conducted in a relaxed physical setting.

5. Background Investigation: The background investigation in selection process may include verification of references from past teachers, employers or public men; police verification; and, medical examination.

The purpose of background investigation is to gather additional information about mental faculties, behaviour and physical health. In India, the selection process in civil service and public sector

employment involves routing of applications through present employer, reference verification, police verification and medical examination. Private sector firms do not expect the applications to be routed through present employer. They also do not normally make use of police verification though for certain top managerial positions, discrete enquiries in professional circles and/or thorough private investigators are resorted to, though seldom.

Background verification is sought to guard oneself against possible falsification by applicants. But given the acute skill shortages and competitive poaching strategies of employers it is possible for some of them to give a clean chit to those whom they wish to get rid of and be unfair to those whom they are not prepared to lose. Therefore, employers in private sector generally find that they get more accurate information when they track the actual past performance than when they merely ask for references reflecting one's opinion about the candidate.

6. Physical/Medical Examination: Physical examination or medical test of a candidate is an important step in the selection procedure. Some organizations ask for a certificate of physical fitness from a medical expert while others insist on a medical examination of the candidate by their own panel of doctors. In some cases medical examination may be an early step in selection so as to avoid the wastage of time and expenditure in the processing of medically unfit persons.

A proper medical examination will ensure high standards of health and physical fitness of employees and will reduce the rates of accident, absenteeism and labour turnover. The physical examination should reveal the physical characteristics of candidates that are significant from the standpoint of efficient performance of the job. The organization should appoint a qualified medical expert to certify whether the candidate is physically fit to perform the job efficiently. Minimum standards of physical fitness should be laid down according to the nature of jobs.

Medical and physical examinations are usually resorted to by employers as part of the selection process mainly to:

- Determine whether the applicant has the physical ability to carry on the
- duties and responsibilities effectively;
- Ascertain whether the applicant has a record of health problems which
- can potentially affect his behaviour and performance on the job adversely;
- Know whether the applicant is more sensitive to certain aspects of workplace environment such as chemicals.

For the above reasons, the medical and physical examinations are considered to provide significant inputs, which are fair and valid, for selection decisions.

7. Appointment Letter: A candidate who has crossed all the hurdles in the selection procedure is formally appointed by issuing an appointment letter or by entering into a service agreement with him. Before putting the candidate on a permanent post, he is generally tried on the job for a year or two by keeping him on probation. This is because no screening device gives a complete picture of the candidate's qualities. It is only by observing a person at work that his suitability can be accurately determined. After successful completion of the probationary period, the selected candidate is confirmed. Those candidates who are found unsuitable during the probationary period may be transferred to some other jobs or they may be given time and training to improve themselves. If this is not possible, they may be sacked.

8. Placement: Placement refers to assigning responsibility to an individual, identifying him with a particular job. If the person adjusts himself to the job and continues to perform as per expectations, it might mean that the candidate is properly placed. However, if the candidate is seen to have problems in adjusting himself to the job, the superior must find out whether the person is properly placed as per the latter's aptitude and potential. Usually, placement problems arise out of

wrong selection or improper placement or both. Therefore, organizations need to constantly review cases of employees performing below expectations/potential and employee related problems such as turnover, absenteeism, accidents and how far they are related to inappropriate placement decisions and remedy the situation without delay.

PLACEMENT

After an employee has been recruited he is provided with basic background information about the employer, working conditions and the information necessary to perform his job satisfactorily. The new employee's initial orientation helps him perform better by providing him information of the company rules, and practices.

According to Pigors and Myers, "Placement consists in matching what the supervisor has reason to think the new employee can do with what the job demands (job requirements), imposes (in strain, working conditions, etc.), and offers (in the form of pay rate, interest, companionship with other, promotional possibilities, etc.)" They further state that it is not easy to match all these factors for a new worker who is still in many ways an unknown quantity. For this reason, the first placement usually carries with it the status of probationer.

A few basic principles should be followed at the time of placement of an employee on the job. These may be enumerated as below:

- The job should be offered to the employee according to his qualifications. The placement should neither be higher nor lower than the qualifications.
- While introducing the job to the new employee, an effort should be made to develop a sense of loyalty and cooperation in him so that he may realise his responsibilities better towards the job and the organisation.
- The employee should be made conversant with the working conditions prevailing in the industry and all things relating to the job. He should also be made aware of the penalties if he commits a wrong.
- Man should be placed on the job according to the requirements of the job. The job should not be adjusted according to the qualifications or requirements of the man. Job first; man next, should be the principle of placement.
- The placement should be ready before the joining date of the newly selected person.
- The placement in the initial period may be temporary as changes are likely after the completion of training. The employee may be later transferred to the job where he can do better justice.

INDUCTION

Induction refers to the introduction of a person to the job and the organization. The purpose is to make the employee feel at home and develop a sense of pride in being the part of the organization and have a sense of commitment to the job. The induction process is also envisaged to indoctrinate, orient, acclimatize and acculturate the person to the job and the organization. The basic thrust of induction training during the first one or few weeks after a person joins service in the organization is to:

- introduce the person to the people with whom he works;
- to familiarize the new employee with the job so that the feeling of being 'out of place' is quickly dispelled.
- make him aware of the general company policies that apply to him as also the specific work situation and requirements;

- answer any questions and clarify any doubts that the person may have about the job and the organization; and
- provide on-the-job instruction, check back periodically how the person is doing and offer help, if required.
- to make the new employee efficient as quickly as possible.
- to encourage the new employee to become committed to the organization and thus less likely to leave quickly.

While the personnel staff may provide general orientation relating to organization, the immediate supervisor should take the responsibility for specific orientation relating to the job and work-unit members. The follow-up orientation is to be coordinated by both the personnel department and the supervisor with a view mainly to obtain feedback and provide guidance and counseling as required. Proper induction would enable the employee to get off to a good start and to develop his overall effectiveness on the job and enhance his potential.

It is generally unwise to communicate a great deal of information orally to new employees at the time of joining the organization. The stress of the first day in a new environment can be equated with 'cultural shock'. The danger is that little will be remembered. It is wise to provide written 'back-up' to vital information communicated orally, for this reason.

An employee handbook containing the following information is useful:

- Brief description of the organization - numbers employed, locations, products, etc.
- Basic conditions of employment – pay scales, holidays, pension, hours of work etc.
- Sick leave arrangements-notification, pay, certification.
- Disciplinary and grievance handling procedures.
- Trade union membership and collective bargaining arrangements.
- Staff purchase arrangements and other 'perks'.
- Traveling and subsistence arrangements.
- Medical and welfare facilities.
- Canteen facilities.
- Health and safety arrangements.
- Education and training policies and facilities.

The content of employee handbooks varies depending on such organizational characteristics as numbers employed, jobs performed and managerial policies and practices. Handbooks need not be glossy and should be written clearly and concisely with the information needs of the employee as the focus.

Attention should also be given to the training methods utilized to convey information to new employees. These usefully could include film or videotape, tape/slide presentation, written handout supplemented by question and answer session, lecture etc.

Roles in Induction:

Line managers, supervisors, fellow workers, personnel and training staff all have a role to play in the induction of new workers. One activity which may be carried out by each of these is listed below:

- *Departmental manager:* Welcoming new employees to the department.

- *Supervisors*: Explaining the job to the new employee and providing support during the initial period.
- *Fellow workers*: Making the new employee feel welcome and comfortable in the work group.
- *Personnel staff*: Explaining conditions of employment very early in the employment of the newcomer.
- *Training staff*: Designing induction courses or other training aids relevant to the needs of new employees.

Departmental Induction: A more informal induction process IS probably just as important as a training course. For the new employee it may be far more important, at least in the initial stages of employment with an organization, to get to know one's colleagues and the nature of one's job, than to be given more general information about the employing organization. In a large organization, it is likely that the personnel or training department will carry responsibility for the formal part of the induction process, but line managers and supervisors should not abdicate responsibility for the less formal process. The importance of paying attention to the early period of a new employee's 'life' with an organization should be stressed to line managers. Far too often, new employees are left to 'find their own feet', spending time reading documentation or aimlessly wandering around trying to get information. New employees should at least be welcomed by their departmental manager even if – as commonly occurs – the immediate supervisor is mainly responsible for introducing the new employee to the job and to workmates. In small companies, where it would not be economic to organize a formal induction programme, it is even more vital that someone (probably the supervisor) is responsible for introducing each new employee to the organization.

Ways of Reducing the Effects of the Induction Crisis

- Get better information about candidates during recruitment and selection.
- Give candidates better information about the job on offer. To some degree people select themselves for jobs. This may include information which will cause candidates to withdraw or to refuse an offer of employment.
- Be honest about training and career development.
- Improve the induction process.

In the words of John M. Ivancevich, "Orientation orients, directs, and guides employees to understand the work, firm, colleagues, and mission. It introduces new employees to the organisation, and to his new tasks, managers, and work groups."

According to John Bernardin, "Orientation is a term used for the organizationally sponsored, formalized activities associated with an employee's socialisation into the organisation."

Billimoria has defined orientation as, "Induction (orientation) is a technique by which a new employee is rehabilitated into the changed surroundings and introduced to the practices, policies, and purposes of the organisation."

Orientation is one component of the new employee socialization process. Socialization is the ongoing process of instilling in all new employees prevailing attitudes, standards, values, patterns of behaviour that are expected by the organisation and its departments.

Thus, orientation is a process through which a new employee is introduced to the organisation. It is the process wherein an employee is made to feel comfortable and at home in the organisation. The new employee is handed over a rulebook, company booklets, policy manuals, progress reports and documents containing company information which are informational in nature. It is responsibility of the human resource department to execute the orientation programme.

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