

Selecting employees through Interviews

Case duration (Min): **> 60**

Human Resource Management (HRM)

Selection

Worldwide

Case summary:

This case study can be completed in less than 60 minutes if certain questions are omitted.

This case considers employee selection (interviewing) both from the perspective of the candidate and the interviewer. Employee selection is considered as a resourcing decision, based upon the perceptions and judgements of interviewers. We consider and evaluate the effectiveness of interviewing, and discuss interview objectives, methods, techniques and approaches.

Learning objectives:

Evaluate the selection interview as a method used to determine the suitability of a candidate for employment.

Case problem:

How do organisations make quality recruitment decisions?

First, if you are taking a taught management course then consult with your tutor and ensure that the case has not been scheduled into a teaching class or tutorial. If it has not:

1. Play/ read the media associated with the case. You may need to access the Internet and enter a URL to locate any video clips.
2. Attempt the Case study questions.

Consider attempting the case study as a group exercise; you could form a study group with fellow students.

3. Check the suggested answers - remember these are suggestions only and there are often many possible answers.

Discuss questions and answers with other students.

4. If you feel your answer(s) were weak then consider reading the relevant suggested readings again (also see the case study suggested references).

Title/ Media type	URL/ Media description
How to shine in interviews:	http://videos.silicon.com/60633793.htm
Film	Cathy Holley and Vicky Maxwell Davies from Boyden Global Executive Search unveil their top tips for selling yourself in person.
Interview dos and don'ts:	http://videos.silicon.com/60640522.htm
Film	Discuss their 'dos and don'ts' for interviews - from body language to asking the right questions.

NOTES:

Case study questions...

Action		Pre/During/After class
1	INTERVIEWING: The interview is a common method used to fill vacancies within the organisation. With reference to the formal and informal, identify what is meant by the selection interview. You should also comment on the function of the interview.	During
2	INTERVIEWERS: The film clip provided applicants (potential recruits/candidates) with advice on how to prepare for the interview. Identify and discuss interview preparation for and conduct of selection interviews. What should the interviewer do prior to the interview and why is it important to make a good impression on the candidate?	During
3	EVALUATING SELECTION INTERVIEWS: The interview has attracted criticism for many years. In your groups, critically evaluate the selection interview (method), commenting on its validity (does the method achieve its purpose), reliability (consistency of results), sensitivity (ability to distinguish one candidate from another), practicality and weaknesses. In your discussion you should make reference to person perception and errors of judgement.	During
4	INTERVIEW VALIDITY: Consider your response to the previous question and the value of selection interviews-critically discuss whether organisations should use selection interviews as a method to fill vacancies and the measures that may be taken in order to improve their validity.	During
5	ADVICE FOR CANDIDATES With reference to answers to previous questions and drawing specifically on the film clip(s), what advice might you give to applicants called for a selection interview?	During

SELECTION

Screening job applicants to ensure that the most appropriate candidates are hired

Question/ Answer

1 INTERVIEWING:

The interview is a common method used to fill vacancies within the organisation. With reference to the formal and informal, identify what is meant by the selection interview. You should also comment on the function of the interview.

Selection - Screening job applicants to ensure the most appropriate candidates are hired.

An interview is a conversation with a purpose and in this case the purpose is recruitment/selection; the interview involves an exchange of information, typically the candidate provides information about themselves their abilities, competences and work experience and in some cases the interviewer may provide information about the organisation and of the specific role advertised.

The function of the interview is to obtain predictive evidence regarding a candidate's likely performance – as was mentioned in the film clip, the interviewer wants to ascertain (00:30) whether the candidate meets the criteria and could 'do the job'.

2 INTERVIEWERS:

The film clip provided applicants (potential recruits/candidates) with advice on how to prepare for the interview. Identify and discuss interview preparation for and conduct of selection interviews. What should the interviewer do prior to the interview and why is it important to make a good impression on the candidate?

To be effective, an interview must be more than a friendly chat. Interviewers must therefore make plans.

The interviewer should:

1. ☐ Read relevant information (CV/application form etc) beforehand
2. ☐ Select an appropriate environment (quiet room without interruptions)
3. ☐ Determine the type of interview (traditional, unstructured, structured, criterion-based or situational, hypothetical or behavioural-based questioning)

Good candidates are more likely to accept an offer if they consider that the procedure has been fair and rejected applicants may continue to have a positive view of an organisation's brand if they feel they have been fairly treated.

3 EVALUATING SELECTION INTERVIEWS:

The interview has attracted criticism for many years. In your groups, critically evaluate the selection interview (method), commenting on its validity (does the method achieve its purpose), reliability (consistency of results), sensitivity (ability to distinguish one candidate from another), practicality and weaknesses. In your discussion you should make reference to person perception and errors of judgement.

The selection interview is only a valid method if it distinguishes the most suitable applicants from others. Selection methods must be convenient and cost-effective if they are to be practical. As a method of selection, the interview must enable one candidate to be distinguished from another. Interview outcomes (results) should be consistent i.e. different assessors would come to the same conclusion and any test question should actually measure the attribute or characteristic it is supposed to measure.

Interviewers must use the evidence of their senses and their experience-based cognitive abilities in order to judge candidates. They will use a variety of cues (candidate appearance and body language etc) as evidence. Several errors of judgement may occur in this process such as: the halo effect (first impressions and 'all good' or 'all bad'), stereotyping and logical error (assumptions). Students may bear in mind recent research showing some judgements are made within seconds and that first impressions are therefore important. Snap judgements and perception errors are likely to have consequences for fair selection. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that candidate sequencing may impact upon the selection decision. Participants appearing later in the day seem to do better than those performing at the beginning (the serial position effect). Consequently, first impressions count and appearance followed by information on the application form are significant factors.

4 INTERVIEW VALIDITY:

Consider your response to the previous question and the value of selection interviews-critically discuss whether organisations should use selection interviews as a method to fill vacancies and the measures that may be taken in order to improve their validity.

Students should recognise that there are a number of types of interview and different methods to conduct them. Aside from the formal and informal interview students may recognise the structured and unstructured approach i.e. interviews based on job analysis or simply a cosy chat. Structured interviews are conducted to a format with questions focused on the job. Questions may be geared towards experience (criterion referenced) or critical incidents (situational). To be effective, an interview must be more than a friendly chat. Prior planning increases validity as a selection tool. Interviewers should be aware of potential sources of bias and poor judgement and may make use of a panel rather than single interviewer; a variant of this is the sequential method with two or more interviews but with the candidates only being expected to face one interviewer at a time. Interviewer questions should be open not closed, accompanied with supportive body language, make use of factual or hypothetical questions and funnelling questioning styles.

5 ADVICE FOR CANDIDATES

With reference to answers to previous questions and drawing specifically on the film clip(s), what advice might you give to applicants called for a selection interview?

Preparation: read the job spec, pick out the criteria used to judge the role, match your experiences to the criteria (look through your CV), and investigate the company and its culture

First Impressions - Style: Energy, passion, commitment, enthusiasm, positive, think about the hand shake, what to wear...

Maintain eye contact and smile occasionally (remember it takes milliseconds for interviewers to decide whether they trust the applicant and to assign a halo or horns) to show you can build relationships

Prepare for typical/ expected questions on leadership, change, transformation, delivery, persuasion skills and stakeholder management etc– note that typical questions will be determined by the vacancy role; give examples when answering questions (set the context, explain what you did and the benefits)

Demonstrate your interest in the company with effective questions of the interviewer

Case study references

Cole, G A. and Kelly, P P. (2011) 'Management Theory and Practice', Ed. 7. Cengage EMEA.

Price, A. (2007) 'Human Resource Management in a Business Context', Ed. 3. Cengage Learning EMEA.