Personnel Recruitment, Selection, and Placement[1][2]

Personnel selection, defined as the process used to evaluate job candidates and then determine which one(s) to hire, is usually preceded by the recruitment process, and sometimes followed by the placement process. Personnel selection represents the oldest and most traditional concept in the field of Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology dating back to the start of the 20th century (Farr & Tippins, 2010). Selection uses a series of materials/instruments referred to as "predictors" employers give to job applicants. The predictors are scored and an applicant is chosen to be hired based on the predictor results. Common predictors used by I/O Psychologists in the United States include: biographical data (application forms, work history, past experiences, and biographical information), cognitive ability tests (similar to IQ tests), interviews, work samples, personality tests, job knowledge or aptitude tests, honesty/integrity tests, letters of recommendation, simulations, academic prowess (GPA and education level), and reference checks (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011). Determining the optimal combination of predictors to give to applicants is a central topic for those that perform personnel selection and involve considerations like cost, time, legality, validity, reliability, practicality, and acceptance in the business world. The validation of predictors with criteria (benchmarks of successful performance) is a central function of selection researchers and is often accomplished with the help of advanced I/O concepts like meta-analysis and validity generalization. Selection can have a subtle division between screening (which comes early in the selection process) and attempts to "weed out" unqualified and/or poor applicants and formal selection, which attempts to select the optimal candidate from the qualified applicants that remain after screening.

The recruitment process is defined as organizational activities employers take to identify potentially suitable job applicants and entice them to apply for available jobs. Employers realize that applicants are often "recruiting" them as well, making the process a two-way street (Dineen & Soltis, 2011). Recruiting, like selection that follows, has become a product of current technological advances; websites, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, on-line applications, and internet job boards (e.g., Monster.com, HotJobs.com, and Careerbuilder.com) are a few examples of the changes that have occurred from the more traditional recruitment sources such as classified ads, TV, radio, career fairs, word-of-mouth, employment agencies, and trade journals/conferences. Companies not only have to use job analysis and workforce data to identify job needs but also identify the optimal way to attract qualified applicants to consider their firm. Lastly, knowing not only whom and where to recruit, organizations need to know how many leads it will take to end up with a hire and how long that process will take so that the job is filled when needed.

Placement, when it occurs, happens after the selection phase and is the assignment of recently hired applicants to one of several openings based on their predictor scores (*Placement and classification*, 2007). In many instances, placement will be automatic (and not really occur per se) when there is a single job opening, so the one person hired is "placed" in the one and only job opening. However, for medium and larger companies, sometimes multiple applicants are hired "en masse" and then sorted (i.e., placed) into one of several job openings. A simple example would be if a dozen new managerial applicants were hired and then placed into either sales management, IT management, or human resources management based on their predictor scores. A more involved form of placement is referred to as classification in

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which an even larger and more complex battery of predictors is used. The U.S. military provides a classic example of classification whereby incoming recruits take a series of multiple assessments to decide whether a recruit should be in the general infantry, logistics, motor pool, combat engineer, medic, and so forth (Born & Scholoarios, 2005). All three areas (recruitment, selection, and placement) are continually updated and modified on the basis of sound theory and research in conjunction with "best practices" in the field to [ideally] ensure that the optimal job candidate is located and hired.

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