

Introduction

When recruiting and selecting people to perform a job competently, the employer starts with a job to be done and a number of candidates – one or more of whom may or may not perform well in that job.

Our role as recruiters is to assess each candidate in relation to the requirements of that job and to select those who will be effective.

The purpose behind the interview is to gain valid and relevant evidence from the candidate in terms of thoughts, facts, beliefs, values, behaviours, experiences, knowledge, opinions, aspirations, goals etc. This evidence will enable us to make a sound judgement of each candidate against each of the criteria deemed relevant to effective job performance.

Behavioural, Situational and Competency based Interviews

There is an increasing need to link business performance and employee skills so that business performance is improved through improved employee ability. Therefore, being able to identify the characteristics of top performers and developing a framework against which to measure individual employees is essential.

All of the above involve a series of job related questions usually with predetermined answers, a thorough job analysis and pre-determined scales are usually created on which to score the candidate's answers.

Behavioural based interviews tend to be based in the past whilst situational based interviews are future oriented and hypothetical. Competency based interviews also tend to be based in the past and questions are designed to test specific dimensions of the job.

Preparation

This is your earliest opportunity to gain the best possible understanding of the employer's organisation (company profile), the position to be filled (job specification) and the type of person (person specification) who is most effectively going to fill the requirements of the role.

Be careful and thorough at this stage so that you gain a clear understanding in terms of company profile, job and in particular, the person specification.

Assess yourself in relation to the requirements of the job against each of the criteria relevant to the effective job performance based on your skills, knowledge and characteristics.

By this stage, the procedure of the interview process should be clear. If it isn't, ask.

Give due consideration to your personal appearance on the day.

Research the location of the interview, so that you arrive with time to spare to relax for a minute before the interview, to quieten and clear your mind.

The Interview

Be at ease but be alert

Listen to what is being said

Be natural

Don't rush when posed with a really probing question

Avoid being critical or opinionated

Be aware of your own prejudices and biases

Give valid and relevant evidence which shows understanding in your answers drawing on your skills, knowledge and views

Ask questions on areas for further explanation or questioning

Don't leave without knowing what will happen next and when you may expect to hear from them

Generally

Be prepared to speak about your current job situation

Why are you applying?

Why are you considering leaving your present employment?

What are you hoping for?

What are you hoping to leave behind?

What is your current job title?

Within what structure?

What is the overall purpose of your present job?

How did you obtain your present job?

What are your prospects in your present job?

How is your performance measured?

Be prepared to speak about the following:

Your background (family and education)

Career history

Current job performance

Specific areas to be tested related to the person specification

Future career plans

Non-work (family, interests and health)

Psychometric Testing

You may be required to carry out a psychometric test.

These usually consist of a number of questions, which have been tried out and found to be satisfactory. The scores obtained by individuals on the tests can be compared to the scores of various other groups, known as norms.

Underlying psychometric tests is the notion that everything a person does is predictable, in terms of abilities, personality, motivation, and mood in relation to a particular situation the person is in. Applied to a job, it means that there is an ideal set of characteristics for each job. The task of psychometrics is to test those characteristics as closely as possible.

In short, ability tests measure particular and existing abilities of the individual whilst aptitude tests measure psychological traits (often personality and ability). Personality tests measure individual differences in terms of personality traits (temperament and dynamics) whilst interest tests are used to give an indication of the type of work that individuals will be interested in doing and are theoretical.