

Chapter Six – Self Notes
EMPLOYEE SELECTION
Shirley Nguyen ADM2337

SUMMARY

OUTCOME 1 Selection is the process of choosing individuals who have relevant qualifications to fill existing or projected job openings. The selection process should start with a job analysis. Research shows that complete and clear job specifications help interviewers differentiate between qualified and unqualified applicants and reduces the effect of an interviewer's biases and prejudices. The number of steps in the selection process and their sequence will vary, not only with the organization but also with the type and level of jobs to be filled.

OUTCOME 2 The employee selection process should provide as much reliable and valid information as possible about applicants so that their qualifications can be carefully matched with the job's specifications. The information that is obtained should be clearly job related or predict success on the job and be free from potential discrimination. Reliability refers to the consistency of test scores over time and across measures. Validity refers to the accuracy of the measurements taken. Validity can be assessed in terms of whether the measurement is based on a job specification (content validity), whether test scores correlate with performance criteria (predictive validity), and whether the test accurately measures what it purports to measure (construct validity).

OUTCOME 3 Interviews are customarily used in conjunction with résumés, application forms, biographical information blanks, references, background investigations, and various types of preemployment tests. Despite problems with its validity, the employment interview remains central to the selection process. Depending on the type of job, applicants could be interviewed by one person, members of a work team, or other individuals in the organization. Structured interviews have been found to be better predictors of the performance of job applicants than unstructured interviews. Some interviews are situational and can focus on hypothetical situations or actual behavioural descriptions of a candidate's previous work experiences.

Regardless of the technique chosen, those who conduct interviews should receive special training to acquaint them with interviewing methods and employment equity considerations. The training should also make them more aware of the nature of the job and its requirements.

OUTCOME 4 Preemployment tests are more objective than interviews and can give managers a fuller sense of the capabilities of different candidates. A wide range of tests exists. Cognitive ability tests are especially valuable for assessing verbal, quantitative, and reasoning abilities. Personality and interest tests are perhaps best used for placement or career development. Job knowledge and work sample tests are achievement tests that are useful for determining whether a candidate can perform the duties of the job without further training. Physical ability tests can be used to prevent accidents and injuries, particularly for physically demanding work. However, they must not be used if they have a disparate impact on candidates in designated groups. Medical examinations and drug tests can be legally administered only after a conditional offer of employment has been made.

OUTCOME 5 In the process of making decisions, all "can do" and "will do" factors should be assembled and weighted systematically so that the final decision can be based on a composite of the most reliable and valid information. Although the clinical approach to decision making is used more than the statistical approach, the former lacks the accuracy of the latter. Compensatory models allow a candidate's high score on one predictor to make up for a low score on another. When the multiple cutoff model is used, only those candidates who score above a minimum cutoff level remain in the running. A variation of the multiple cutoff is the multiple hurdle model, which involves several stages and cutoff levels. Whichever approach is used, the goal is to select a greater proportion of individuals who will be successful on the job.

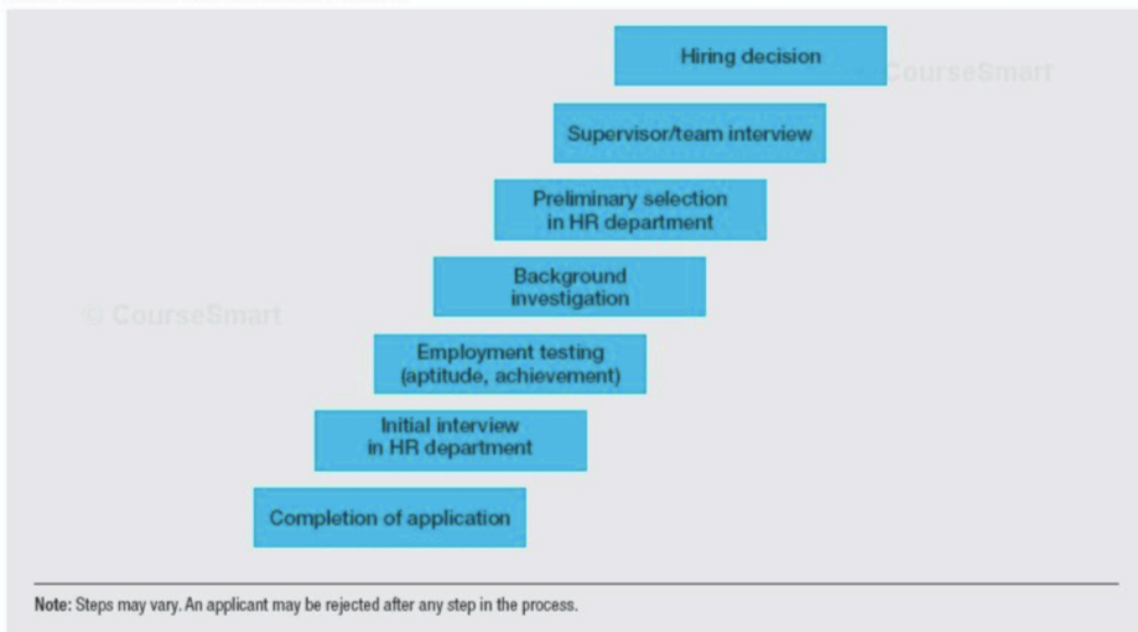
OUTCOME ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE SELECTION PROCESS

- o **Selection:** The process of choosing individuals who have relevant qualifications to fill existing or projected job openings.

- Overall goal of selection is to maximize “hits” and avoid “misses.”
 - The cost of one type of miss would be the direct and indirect expense of hiring an employee who turns out to be unsuccessful.
 - Another type of miss is an opportunity cost – someone who could have been successful did not get a chance.
- Job specifications from job analysis help identify the individual competencies employees need for success – knowledge, skills, abilities, and other factors (KASOs) that lead to superior performance.
- Managers use selection methods such as interviews, references, and preemployment tests to measure applicant KSAOs against the competencies required for the job.
 - **Reliability:** The degree to which interviews, tests, and other selection procedures yield comparable data over time.
 - Also refers to the extent to which two or more methods (Ex. interviews and tests) yield similar results or are consistent.
 - **Interrater Reliability:** Agreement among two or more raters is one measure of a method’s consistency.
 - **Validity:** The degree to which a test or selection procedure measures a person’s attributes.
 - **2 reasons for validating a selection procedure:**
 1. Increase employee productivity.
 2. Required by employment equity regulations.

FIGURE 6.2

STEPS IN THE SELECTION PROCESS



Note: Steps may vary. An applicant may be rejected after any step in the process.

OUTCOME TWO: INITIAL SCREENING

- The initial pieces of information for screening candidates include cover letters, resumes, and applications and often the Internet.
- Developing explicit evaluation criteria and a structured way to review resumes can help make the process less subjective.

1. Internet Checks and Phone Screening

- HR professionals and hiring managers will often “Google” applicants’ names and check online social networking sites before deciding whether or not to invite them for face-to-face interview.
 - Disrespectful to the privacy of applicants and is illegal in some countries (Ex. Finland).
 - Difficult to verify the authenticity of information posted online.
- Short phone interviews are often conducted to narrow down the field of applicants to save managers time by eliminating candidates who are not likely to be hired.
- **Video Resumes:** Short video clips highlight applicants’ qualifications beyond what they can communicate on their resume.

2. Application Forms

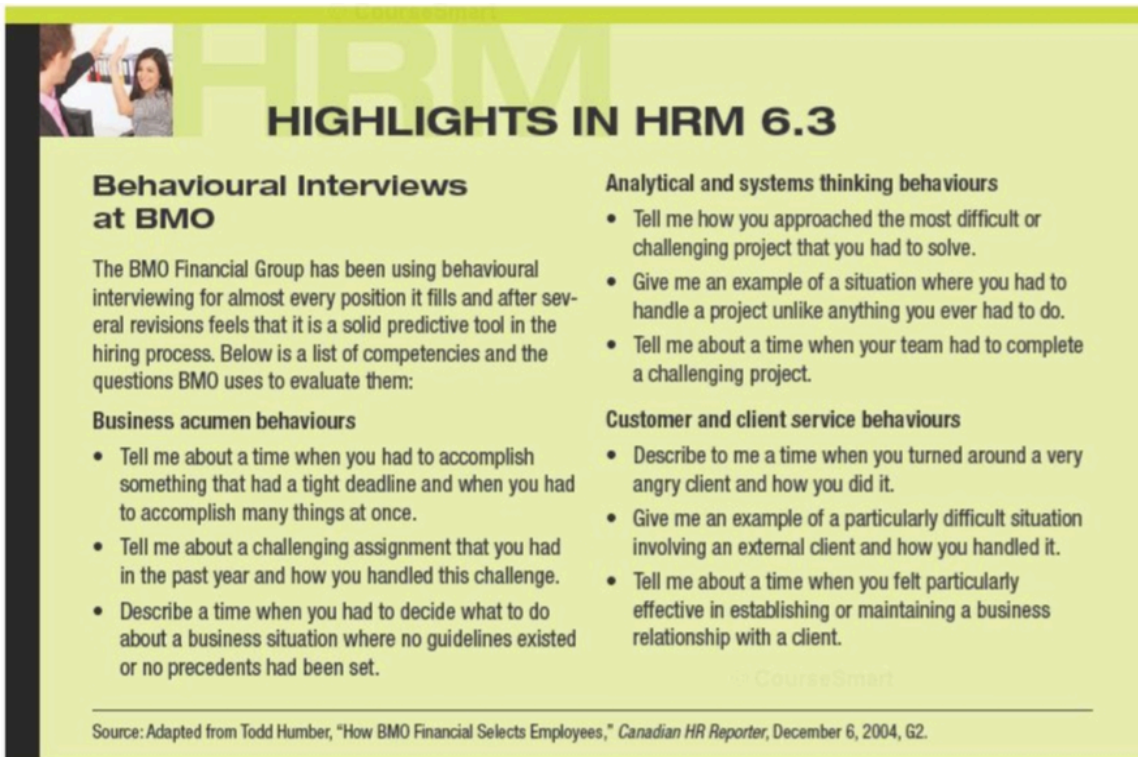
- Provides quick and systematic means of obtaining a variety of information for deciding whether an applicant meets the minimum requirements for experience, education, and so on.
- Provides a basis for questions the interviewer will ask about the applicant’s background.
- Offers sources for reference checks.
- Provides information regarding the employer’s conformity with various laws and regulations.
- **7 considerations to make when creating an application form:**
 - I. **Application date**
 - II. **Educational background**
 - Information about grade school, high school, college, and university.
 - Should avoid asking for dates attended, as this information is sensitive to age.
 - III. **Experience**
 - Include questions that focus on work experience related to the job.
 - IV. **Arrests and criminal convictions**
 - Questions about arrests, convictions, and criminal records should be avoided.
 - If bonding is a requirement, the candidate can be asked whether they are eligible.

- V. **Country of citizenship**
 - It is allowable to ask whether the person is legally entitled to work in Canada.
 - VI. **References**
 - Should include names, addresses, and phone numbers of references provided.
 - VII. **Disabilities**
 - Should avoid asking about disabilities or hospitalization or whether candidates have received workers' compensation.
3. **Online Applications**
- Faster way of recruiting candidates and filling job openings.
 - Promotes greater employee diversity.
 - Downside of posting jobs and accepting online applications is that it leads to a large volume of applicants that fail to meet minimum requirements.

OUTCOME THREE: EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS

- The structure of the interview and the training of interviewers strongly influence the success of the hiring process.
- In highly structured interviews, the interviewer determines the course that the interview will follow as each question is asked.
- **7 types of interviews:**
 1. **Nondirective Interview**
 - An interview in which the applicant is allowed the maximum amount of freedom in determining the course of the discussion, while the interviewer carefully refrains from influencing the applicant's remarks.
 - The interviewer asks broad, open-ended questions and permits the applicant to talk freely with minimum interruptions – follow-up questions are often involved for elaboration.
 - "Tell me more about your experiences on your last job."
 - Method is most likely to be used for high-level positions and in counselling.
 - The reliability and validity of these interviews are not likely to be as great.
 - No set procedure is followed and as a result, little information comes from these interviews that allows interviewers to cross-check agreement with other interviewers.
 2. **Structured Interview**
 - An interview in which a set of standardized questions with an established set of answers is used.
 - Responses are rated against a set of answers, which provides a more consistent basis for evaluating job candidates.

- Interview process is based exclusively on job duties and requirements critical to job performance.
3. **Situational Interview**
- An interview in which an applicant is given a hypothetical incident and asked how he or she would respond to it.
 - The applicant's response is then evaluated relative to pre-established benchmark standards.
4. **Behavioural Description Interview**
- An interview in which an applicant is asked questions about what he or she did in a given situation.
 - Focuses on actual work incidents in the interviewee's past.
 - Such an approach to interviewing, based on a critical incidents job analysis, assumes that the past performance is the best predictor of future performance.
 - More effective than situational interview approach for hiring higher-level positions such as general managers and executives.



HRM HIGHLIGHTS IN HRM 6.3

Behavioural Interviews at BMO

The BMO Financial Group has been using behavioural interviewing for almost every position it fills and after several revisions feels that it is a solid predictive tool in the hiring process. Below is a list of competencies and the questions BMO uses to evaluate them:

<p>Business acumen behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a time when you had to accomplish something that had a tight deadline and when you had to accomplish many things at once. • Tell me about a challenging assignment that you had in the past year and how you handled this challenge. • Describe a time when you had to decide what to do about a business situation where no guidelines existed or no precedents had been set. 	<p>Analytical and systems thinking behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me how you approached the most difficult or challenging project that you had to solve. • Give me an example of a situation where you had to handle a project unlike anything you ever had to do. • Tell me about a time when your team had to complete a challenging project. <p>Customer and client service behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe to me a time when you turned around a very angry client and how you did it. • Give me an example of a particularly difficult situation involving an external client and how you handled it. • Tell me about a time when you felt particularly effective in establishing or maintaining a business relationship with a client.
---	---

Source: Adapted from Todd Humber, "How BMO Financial Selects Employees," *Canadian HR Reporter*, December 6, 2004, G2.

5. **Panel and Sequential Interviews**
- **Panel Interview:** An interview in which a board of interviewers questions and observes a single candidate.

- After the interview, the interviewers pool their observations and rating scores if the interview is structured to reach a consensus about the suitability of the candidate.
 - Provides higher reliability because multiple inputs are included.
 - Hiring discrimination is minimized as the panel is composed of a diverse group of interviewers.
 - **Sequential Interview:** A format in which a candidate is interviewed by multiple people, one right after another.
 - Allows different interviewers who have vested interest in the candidate's success to meet and evaluate the person one on one.
 - The interviewers later get together and compare their assessments.
- 6. **Computer and Virtual Interviews**
 - Typically requires candidates to answer a series of 75 to 125 multiple-choice questions tailored to the job.
 - These answers are compared to an ideal profile and those that are unqualified are filtered out from getting a personal interview.
- 7. **Video and Digitally Recorded Interviews**
 - Employers can make assessments about candidates' technical abilities, energy level, and appearance before incurring the costs of a face-to-face meeting.
 - The goal is to enable faster, higher quality decisions at lower costs.
 - By recording and playing back the interviews to several companies' executives, firms can eliminate complications involved in setting up many more interviews.
- **11 Guidelines for Employment Interviewers**
 - Organizations should be cautious in selecting employment interviewers.
 - Desired qualities for interviewers include: humility, the ability to think objectively, maturity, and poise. Given the importance of diversity in the workforce, experience in associating with people from a variety of backgrounds is also desirable.
 - Undesirable qualities for interviewers include: over-talkativeness, extreme opinions, and biases.
 1. **Understand the job**
 2. **Establish an interview plan**
 3. **Establish and maintain rapport and listen actively**
 4. **Pay attention to nonverbal cues**
 5. **Provide information as freely and honestly as possible**
 6. **Use questions effectively**
 7. **Separate facts from inferences**
 8. **Recognize biases and stereotypes**

9. **Avoid the “halo error,” or judging an individual favourably or unfavourably overall on the basis of only one strong point (or weak point) on which you place high value**
 10. **Control the course of the interview**
 11. **Standardize the questions asked**
- **3 post-interview screenings:**
 1. **Reference Checks**
 - The most reliable information usually comes from supervisors, who are in the best position to report on an applicant’s work habits and performance.
 - As a legal protection for all concerned, it is important to ask the applicant to fill out forms permitting information to be solicited from former employers and other reference sources.
 2. **Background Checks**
 - The vast majority (over 90%) of Canadian companies surveyed by the Canadian HR Reporter indicated that they conduct background checks with previous employment history (92%), academic qualifications (53%), criminal record (50%), and credit rating (11%).
 - Many checks that were done manually are now being done online using existing computer databases.
 - An increasing number of companies are simply using Internet searches to uncover background information on a potential candidate through social networking sites.
 - The most reliable information usually comes from prior supervisors.
 3. **Credit Checks**
 - The use of consumer credit reports by employers as a basis for establishing an applicant’s eligibility for employment has become more restricted.
 - Applicants must agree in writing to a credit report and have the right to review its contents.

OUTCOME FOUR: PREEMPLOYMENT TESTS

- **Preemployment Test:** An objective and standardized measure of a sample of behaviour that is used to gauge a person’s knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) relative to other individuals.
 - Creates a potential for legal challenges – in the past, candidates have claimed that these tests they took were discriminatory.
- **11 types of employment tests:**
 1. **Job Knowledge Tests**
 - A type of achievement test designed to measure a person’s level of understanding about a particular job.

2. **Work Sample Tests**

- Requires the applicant to perform tasks that are actually part of the work required on the job.
- Organizations that are interested in moving toward competency-based selection – that is, hiring based on observation of behaviours previously shown to distinguish successful employees – increasingly use work samples to see potential employees “in action.”

3. **Assessment Centre Tests**

- **Assessment Centre:** A process by which individuals are evaluated as they participate in a series of situations that resemble what they might need to handle the job.
- At the end of the assessment centre period, the assessors’ observations are combined to develop an overall picture of the strengths and needs of the participants.
- Ex. Leaderless group discussions, role-playing, behavioural interviews.

4. **Cognitive Ability Tests**

- Measures mental capabilities such as general intelligence, verbal fluency, numerical ability, and reasoning ability.

5. **Biodata Tests**

- Candidates are questioned about events and behaviours that reflects attitudes, experiences, interest, skills, and abilities.
- These questions relate to events that have occurred in a person’s life and ask what the person typically did in those situations.

6. **Personality and Interest Inventories**

- Personality tests are better predictors of motivation, such as their leadership efforts and propensity to adhere to rules.
- Rather than being used to make hiring decisions, personality and interest inventories may be most useful for helping people with their occupational selection and career planning.
- The “Big Five” factors are the following:
 - **Extroversion:** The degree to which someone is talkative, socialable, active, aggressive, and excitable.
 - **Aggreeableness:** The degree to which someone is trusting, admirable, generous, tolerant, honest, cooperative, and flexible.
 - **Conscientiousness:** The degree to which someone is dependable and organized and perseveres in tasks.
 - **Neuroticism:** The degree to which someone is secure, calm, independent, and autonomous.
 - **Openness to Experience:** The degree to which someone is intelligent, philosophical, insightful, creative, artistic, and curious.

7. **Polygraph Tests**
 - A lie detector that measures the changes in breathing, blood pressure, and pulse of a person who is being questioned.
 8. **Honesty and Integrity Tests**
 - Many employers have increased their use of pencil-and-paper honesty and integrity tests.
 9. **Physical Ability Tests**
 - Particularly for demanding and potentially dangerous jobs, physical abilities such as strength and endurance tend to be good predictors not only of performance but also accidents and injuries.
 - The use of physical ability tests should be carefully validated on the basis of the essential functions of the job.
 10. **Medical Examinations**
 - Given to ensure that the health and fitness of applicants are adequate to meet the job requirements.
 - Can only be conducted only after an offer of employment has been made – the offer can be made conditional on the applicant’s ability to perform the essential duties of the job as determined by job-related medical examination.
 - If the employee has a disability, the employer has a duty to accommodate his or her needs.
 11. **Drug Testing**
 - Addiction to drugs or alcohol is considered a disability, and the employer is to be guided by legislation and by practices such as workplace accommodation.
 - Under human rights statutes, the employer will be required to accommodate the employee’s disability to the point of undue hardship before it can dismiss the employee.
 - **4 types of testing that are not allowed:**
 - Pre-employment drug testing
 - Pre-employment alcohol testing
 - Random drug testing
 - Random alcohol testing of employees in non-safety-sensitive positions
- **3 approaches to determining the validity of tests:**
1. **Criterion-Related Validity**
 - The extent to which a selection tool predicts, or significantly correlates with, important elements of work behaviour.
 - Ex. In a sales environment, sales figures are used as a basis for comparison.
 - **2 types of criterion-related validity:**

- I. **Concurrent Validity:** The extent to which test scores (or other predictor information) match criterion data obtained at about the same time from *current employees*.
 - II. **Predictive Validity:** The extent to which *applicants'* test scores match criterion data obtained from those applicants/employees after they have been on the job for an indefinite period.
 - **Cross-Validation:** Verifying the results obtained from a validation study by administering a test or test battery to a different sample (drawn from the same population).
 - Regardless of the method used, cross-validation is essential.
 - One way to measure a test's validity is to administer it to an organization's current employees and create a benchmark score to which applicants' scores can be compared.
2. **Content Validity**
- The extent to which a selection instrument, such as a test, adequately samples the knowledge and skills needed to perform a particular job.
 - The closer the content of the selection instrument is to actual work samples or behaviours, the greater its content validity.
3. **Construct Validity**
- The extent to which a selection tool measures a theoretical construct or trait.
 - Typical constructs are intelligence, mechanical comprehension, and anxiety.
 - Measuring construct validity requires showing that the psychological trait is related to satisfactory job performance and that the test accurately measures the psychological trait.

OUTCOME FIVE: REACHING A SELCTION DECISION

- The most critical step is the decision to accept or reject applicants.
- A systematic consideration of all the relevant information about applicants is required.

SUMMARIZING INFORMATION ABOUT APPLICANTS

- **2 factors for evaluating candidates:**
 1. **"Can Do" Factors**
 - A candidate's knowledge and skills, as well as the aptitude (the potential) for acquiring new knowledge and skills.
 - Evident from test scores and verified information.
 2. **"Will Do" Factors**
 - A candidate's motivation, interests, and other personality traits.
 - These factors can only be inferred and are difficult to measure.

- Employers can use the responses to interview and application form questions and references to obtain information for making inferences about what an individual will do.
- Both factors are essential to successful performance on the job.
- The employee who has the ability (can do) but is not motivated to use it (will not do) is little better than the employee who lacks the necessary ability.

DECISION-MAKING STRATEGY

- Although many factors have to be considered in terms of making hiring decisions, the following are some of the questions that managers must consider:
 1. Should the individuals be hired according to their highest potential or according to the needs of the organization?
 2. At what grade or wage level should the individual be started?
 3. Should the selection be concerned primarily with finding an ideal employee to match the job currently open, or should a candidate's potential for advancement in the organization be considered?
 4. To what extent should those who are not qualified but not qualifiable (have potential) be considered?
 5. Should overqualified individuals be considered?
 6. What effect will a decision have on the organization's meeting its employment equity plans and diversity considerations?
- **2 approaches in making hiring decisions:**
 1. **Clinical Approach**
 - Those making the selection decision review all the data on the applicants.
 - Then, on the basis of their understanding of the job and the individuals who have been successful in that job, they make a decision.
 - Different individuals often arrive at different decisions about an applicant when they use this approach because each evaluator assigns different weights to the applicant's strengths and weaknesses.
 2. **Statistical Approach**
 - More of an objective decision making approach.
 - Involves identifying the most valid predictors and weighting them using statistical methods, such as multiple regression.