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SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEE SELECTION AND INTERVIEWING

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Abstract

The problem of effective personnel planning was and is an indispensable part of the management of any enterprise. Every owner makes every effort to ensure that the people employed achieve the established goals and strategies of the organization, thereby contributing to the growth of prestige and expansion of capital. A significant capital of any organization is personnel, or human capital, which is why the proper selection of employees is such an important element. For some time now, organizations have been making every effort to ensure that employees are not only properly educated and trained, but are well aligned with the company's mission. Large corporations, want to have an employee as if "on their own," so the goals of both the employer and the employee are important. People for whom professional success is not the most important thing would not be able to find their way in a large international organization. The recruitment and selection process is therefore a key element to check whether a candidate is the right person and in the right place.

Keywords: recruitment, selection, employee, qualification

Introduction

Recruitment is the process during which candidates are sought, selected and chosen for particular jobs - positions that exist or are to be created. Recruitment is one of the essential elements of human resource management in a company. It can be the basis for creating a new quality of a corporation's social potential by attracting the right people who excel in the qualities necessary to carry out new tasks. In the case of internal recruitment, it can be the basis for better utilization of human potential. The element that determines the success of recruitment is the vetting of candidates, i.e. the selection of the most suitable person for the position. This is often the most costly and labor-intensive process, as well as the most responsible. Proper selection ensures effective adaptation as well as integration of the employee, thus promoting good teamwork¹. The hiring of employees in any organization should be based on rational considerations, taking into account both the employer's costs and staffing needs in the context of achieving current and future goals of the company. A rational employment policy should be a consequence of personnel planning, the most important part of which is the planning of needs in terms of the number of employees, as well as their competence. Awareness of the importance of professional competence of employees causes modern organizations to attach increasing importance to the processes of acquiring the most talented and best-educated employees. Selection and recruitment processes are increasingly using the so-called competence system, which allows hiring employees based on the on the basis of an assessment of their competencies and key to their future duties and tasks. In the staffing process, organizations may prefer the so-called "sieve model" - "buying" competencies on the external labor market, or the human capital model - which consists of the organization's focus on the professional development of its own employees and adapting their

¹ Marciniak J. *Pozyskiwanie pracowników*, Wydawnictwo Prawno-Ekonomiczne Infor, Warsaw 1999, p. 45.

competencies to future and current needs. In practice, the most commonly used model is the compilation model, that is, containing both elements of the sieve model and the human capital model².

Sources for sourcing job candidates

They are among the most common methods used to attract candidates. These ads should begin with an evocative headline, under which information will be included:

- ✓ Organization,
- ✓ job position,
- ✓ qualifications and experience regarding the person sought,
- ✓ salary and benefits offered,
- ✓ workplace location,
- ✓ steps to take to apply for a job.

The essential meaning is the headline. The simplest and most obvious solution is to include the name of the job, written in bold. In order to attract attention, it is recommended to state a high salary and make the phrase "plus a company car" if the organization is able to provide the candidate with one. The salary and the car are the main elements of attracting the attention of potential candidates and should therefore be emphasized. Candidates are very suspicious of the formulation that the salary, as well as additional benefits, will depend on the candidate's age and experience. Formulating "salary to be negotiated" can usually mean that either the salary is very inconsistent or so low that the company does not know what salary it can offer and is waiting until the candidate himself demands a certain amount.

The job advertisement should include the name of the company seeking candidates. Post office box numbers should not be used. If the organization wants to remain anonymous, an apt choice is to use external companies. Any additional information to enhance the attractiveness of the company should be included in the ad. Growth or diversification would be mentioned here, as well as any other news that may be of interest to potential candidates, such as future career prospects. The salient features of the position should be conveyed by giving a brief description of the activities performed by the person occupying the position and, if the volume of the ad allows it, the scope and scale of the activities performed. Interest in the offered position should be aroused, but it should not be over-advertised.

Qualifications and experience should be communicated in a way that reflects reality as much as possible. Setting requirements too high is not advisable, nor is specifying the necessary experience accurately. Care should be taken when placing desirable qualities such as motivation, initiative and determination. They have no meaning for candidates. Also meaningless are phrases such as: proven practice or success in previous work, because no one will admit to lacking them anyway. The ad should end with information, how candidates should apply for the job. This information should be placed in a short and concise manner. Candidates can be required to make a written offer, and can also be offered to apply by phone or hold an informal interview at a specific location.

Three types of job advertisements are most commonly used:

- ✓ Ordinary classified ads, which are placed directly next to each other and do not include blank space inside or around the ad, paragraph spacing or indentation. They are inexpensive, but appropriate for low-level positions or positions where routine work is done,
- ✓ Semi-dimensional small ads - it is possible to write headlines in capital letters, indent paragraphs, and put blank space around the ad. They are quite inexpensive, and can be more effective than regular small ads.
- ✓ Full-size ads - surrounded by a frame, inside which you can use any font and illustration. They are costly, but certainly elicit the strongest response. They are mainly used for managerial positions, specialists, as well as technical positions³.

Recruitment via the Internet

The Internet makes it possible to post advertisements, regarding job vacancies, to provide information about the position and the employer, as well as to exchange correspondence between employers and candidates. The latter can not only apply for a position online, but also send their candidacy in the form of a resume to a number of online portals and expect information from the employer. It is possible to create important, detailed information about vacant positions that is constantly compared with incoming resumes, in search of those that meet the requirements for the position. Most often, job advertisements are posted on a recruitment portal. Such a portal contains information about the job and the company, as well as an application form.

The advantage of recruiting via the Internet is that this way you can reach a larger number of people interested in taking up or changing their current job. In addition, it is faster and cheaper than traditional

² Ibid, pp. 53 - 55

³ Armstrong M. *Management(...) op. cit*, p. 370

methods of publishing advertisements. The Internet provides the opportunity to communicate more information about positions and companies, to tailor resumes to the requirements of companies seeking employees, and to send applications electronically. On the other hand, however, this type of "candidate-employer" communication involves the danger of accepting weak and insufficiently competent candidates. In addition, it is not the most widely used source for obtaining candidates⁴.

Stages of selection

Professionally conducted verification, or selection of potential employees, is the key and most labor-intensive stage of external recruitment. Finding and selecting the right candidate for a given position depends on its performance. Selection is a set of activities during which we compare the candidate's characteristics with the requirements of the position and other candidates. The role of those involved in the selection process of candidates is to determine the potential behavior of the persons in question during work, related to specific tasks during work. Depending on depending on the needs and size of the organization should take into account the various stages⁵:

The vetting process must be guided by the criteria of the needs and requirements of the job. Candidates are examined in terms of knowledge, abilities and skills, experience necessary for the job. Such factors as age, nationality or gender should not be taken into account. It is very important to try to eliminate the subjectivity of evaluation, related to personal experiences, views, or prejudices of recruiters. Selection is based on the information gathered about the candidate and his professional life. It is an obvious fact that the more information, the better. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that a very large influx from various sources of different quality data about a candidate can cause a blurred image and, as a result, induce a wrong or hasty decision⁶. Among the most commonly used selection instruments for managerial positions in Poland today are:

- Interview,
- applications (resume, cover letter),
- personnel surveys,
- references⁷.

It is worth noting, in particular, the interview questionnaires used during recruitment and the application questionnaires. Application forms are an important tool needed for initial selection. In the case of an application questionnaire, it is the employer himself who decides what information should be provided by the job applicant and in what order. Application questionnaires (in addition to resumes and cover letters) are a significant convenience for those conducting the initial selection and minimize the possibility of overlooking a valuable candidate at the very beginning of the selection procedure⁸.

The next step of pre-selection is questionnaire interviews. A typical pre-recruitment interview should include the candidate's data, brief information on education and previous professional work. Among the remarks should be such information as punctuality, presentation, communicativeness, as well as questions on the course of career so far, motivation for applying for the position, sometimes also a short question to learn about the candidate's foreign language skills⁹.

Interview

The interview is an important area for evaluating job candidates. This is because it makes it possible to obtain information about the candidate and get a personal impression of him. It is used by managers, personnel consultants or employees responsible for carrying out the recruitment process. Regardless whatever other methods are used - personality tests, problem tasks, group selection methods always culminate in an interview. The specific purpose of the interview can be described as obtaining information about the candidate's career, diagnosis of the person's suitability for a particular position, diagnosis of skills, knowledge and professional and psychosocial predispositions, presenting the candidate with information about the company's goals and organizational structure, realizing objectivity in evaluating the candidate.¹⁰ The duration of the interview depends on the importance and complexity of the position. For routine positions, 20-30 minutes should be sufficient.

⁴ Ibid, p. 371

⁵ Marciniak J. *Pozyskiwanie pracowników*, Wydawnictwo Prawno-Ekonomiczne Infor, Warsaw 1999, pp. 60 - 61

⁶ Ibid, p. 61

⁷ Witkowski T. *Modern methods of personnel selection and evaluation*, Publishing House of the Professional School of Business, 2nd Edition, Cracow 2000, p. 34.

⁸ Sidor-Rządowska M. *Don't lose the pearl, or application forms in the selection process of candidates for work* Personel 2001, no. 13/14 (1-31 July), p.20

⁹ Kamińska-Berezowska *Sociologist in the workplace(...)*, op. cit, p. 143 - 144

¹⁰ Chojnacki W., Balasiewicz A., *Man in modern organizations(...)* op. cit, p. 207

For more important positions, it can last up to an hour. Interviews lasting longer are rare¹¹. When conducting a recruitment interview, remember to observe the following rules:

- ✓ Questions should be formulated with reference to the job description.
- ✓ Provide the right atmosphere.
- ✓ The hierarchy of the various determinants and criteria should be defined.
- ✓ The interview should be conducted by a manager and a specialist in the field.
- ✓ The results obtained during the recruitment process should be compiled in a comprehensive form, including all stages of the interview.
- ✓ The course of the interview should be recorded in a specially prepared form either during the interview or immediately after it¹².

The interview stage

At each stage we obtain information about the candidate, as well as make a kind of evaluation. The staged procedure outlined can end at any stage, so depending on the stage and evaluation criteria, we can speak about the specifics of conducting a recruitment interview. Referring to the first impression can provide a lot of interesting information about the candidate. Although this information can provide superficial information about behavioral traits, external appearance and signs of social status, when we are well prepared for it, they can provide important diagnostic indications. At the preparatory stage, the following selection criteria can be evaluated:

- ✓ Presentation,
- ✓ Personal Culture,
- ✓ Verbal proficiency,
- ✓ Inference skills,
- ✓ The ability to analyze phenomena and make syntheses based on one's knowledge and experience.

However, one should be cautious in formulating final conclusions. Recruiters are prone to making many mistakes, which include: projection error, halo effect, influence of stereotypes. Interviewing based on first impressions must be used with great sensitivity. It is most often used when the candidate's professional tasks are relatively uncomplicated, and success will largely depend on individual aptitude and psychosocial skills¹³.

Interviewing methods

1. Biographical interview - usually begins with a discussion of the beginning of the candidate's life path (education), followed by the subsequent stages of professional life up to the present. (Current or previous job. In the case of graduates, recent educational experience, internships) The order can also be reversed from the last place of employment to positions held in the past to training and education. There is no single optimal order for discussing individual points from a resume, but it is a good idea to determine in advance what order you will follow. The focus should be on the most recent experience, without dwelling too much on experiences dating from the distant past, thus allowing the person to present his or her own career and give him or her the opportunity, if necessary, to ask probing questions. At the outset, don't waste time presenting the organization too broadly and job position. It is desirable to provide this information in advance to reduce the length of the interview, and to encourage the candidate to ask questions at the end of the meeting - the type of questions asked can tell a lot about the candidate¹⁴. Candidates who don't have any questions don't look very interested in taking the job. Those who ask too many, on the other hand, look conservative and do not make a good impression on the employer. The following questions are worth asking:
 - ✓ What are the main responsibilities of this position?
 - ✓ How many people does the team have?
 - ✓ How will I be held accountable for my own accomplishments?
 - ✓ Does the organization have a developed training system?
 - ✓ What are the short- and long-term goals of this vacancy?

¹¹ Armstrong M. *Managing human resources*, Wolter Kluwer Polska Sp. Z o.o. Publishing House, Krakow 2007, p. 390

¹² Chojnacki W., Balasiewicz A., *Man in modern organizations...* op. cit, Torun 2006, p. 207.

¹³ Ibid, p. 208

¹⁴ Armstrong M. *Management (...)* op. cit, p. 391

These questions reveal a positive motivation to work and put the candidate in a completely different light, showing commitment and interest in taking the job¹⁵.

Such a plan is logical, but it only guarantees that you get the information you need if the interviewer is absolutely sure what information he or she wants to get and has prepared questions with which to get the data to make a prediction and a decision to select a candidate.

2. Interviews relating to personal requirements - assessment factors can be used in planning interviews. They identify certain areas for which information can be collected and evaluated, but they do not explicitly indicate which of the collected data allows you to predict that a candidate will be successful in his or her position¹⁶.
3. Structured situational interviewing - in situational interviewing (also called critical event technique), the focus is on the candidate's behavior in certain situations or in the face of events, on the basis of which it is possible to predict what results the candidate can achieve in the future. Candidates are asked to describe their own behavior in the event of a typical situation that is presented to them. In the next phase, candidates are asked further questions aimed at identifying their reactions in more detail, while also gaining a better understanding of how they solve similar problems. Situational questions require the candidate to indicate how he or she would behave in the event of a hypothetical situation resembling real-life circumstances he or she may encounter on the job¹⁷.
4. Structured competency interviews - in a competency interview (sometimes also called a set criteria interview or episodic interview), the interviewer asks a series of questions, each of which relates to a single criterion, such as the competencies, skills or aptitudes required to achieve the appropriate level of performance on the job. These criteria, as determined by the job analysis or competency analysis, form the basis for formulating personnel requirements. The goal is to gather data on selected aspects of a candidate's experience in the use of his or her own skills and competencies, with the assumption, that knowledge of past effects and behavior is the best predictor of future effects and behavior with criteria corresponding to specific job requirements¹⁸.

Episodic questions require the candidate to describe how he or she would have handled specific situations he or she once faced. The questions are about how they reacted to a specific problem and to what extent their behavior was appropriate. They are created with reference to the key competencies identified for the role¹⁹.

Competency-based interviews can provide transparent and appropriate selection rules. A fully competency-based interview structure that is based on established criteria is arguably most appropriate for to job positions that are frequently filled. However, even in the case of a one-time recruitment of employees for a specific position, the technique of asking questions about selected competencies can increase the reliability of a candidate's prediction of success, provided it is applied to all candidates²⁰.

5. Structured psychometric interviews - another type of structured interview is a predetermined set of questions, similar to those used in psychometric tests. Unlike other types of structured interview, here there is no provision for any discussion of the questions asked. The goal is to obtain consistency in the results of different interviews, conducted by different people. This method is highly structured, and its use, due to the need for the necessary research and training, will probably be limited only to situations where multiple candidates are interviewed²¹.

The choice of interview method is the more the method lends itself to structuring through the use of situational or episodic questions. A typical job interview may contain about 10 or more - depending on the job position - prepared episodic or situational questions²².

Techniques for conducting a job interview

Starting and ending an interview

¹⁵ www.rozmowarekrutacyjna.pl Angelika Sniegocka

¹⁶ Armstrong M. *Managing human resources*, Wolter Kluwer Polska Sp. z o.o. Publishing House, Krakow 2007, p. 392

¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 392-393

¹⁸ Armstrong M. *Resource Management(...)* op. cit, p. 393

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 393

²⁰ Ibid, p. 394

²¹ Armstrong M. *Resource Management(...)* op cit, p. 394

²² Ibid, p. 395

The interview should begin by creating a pleasant atmosphere. If candidates are met with a cold reception, they will not be able to give the information that is expected of them in a relaxed and open manner.

At the end of the interview, ask candidates if they would like to add anything from themselves to support their job application efforts. They should also be given the opportunity to ask questions. The closing element of the interview is to thank them and give them information about the next stage of the selection procedure. In general, the final decision should not be announced during the interview²³.

Asking questions

A job interview always has a specific purpose. The task of the interviewer is to extract as much necessary information as possible from the candidate, it is desirable in this case to ask open-ended questions - questions that cannot be answered with "yes" or "no", forcing an exhaustive answer. In addition to open-ended questions, probing questions, closed-ended questions, hypothetical questions and questions about behavior, abilities, motivation, etc. can also be used²⁴.

✓ Open questions

The purpose of open-ended questions is to extract as much information as possible from the candidate and to encourage him to give comprehensive answers. Answers to these questions may focus on superfluous details or omit important matters. Therefore, be sure that all the necessary information has been obtained, and the interview proceeds in a smooth and controlled manner by the interviewer²⁵.

✓ Probing questions

These questions are used to get more detailed data from the interviewee and also to make sure that all relevant information has been collected. These questions are asked when the answers given are too general or on suspicion, that the candidate may be hiding some important information. People who are not good at interviewing often ignore vague answers that don't bring much information, so they don't ask probing questions, but strictly follow a set list of open-ended questions²⁶.

✓ Closed questions

Closed questions are designed to specify a particular piece of information. The expected answer should consist of a single word or short sentence. These questions are also probing in nature, but the answer is a concise statement of fact without going into detail²⁷.

✓ Hypothetical questions

Hypothetical questions, which are used in structured situational interviews, present candidates with a specific situation and test how they would react if it occurred. These questions can be prepared in advance to test how candidates would approach a typical problem. In order to get a lot of information about a candidate through the answers, it is necessary for these questions to be well matched to the candidate's range of knowledge and experience. Hypothetical questions can also lead to hypothetical answers, so judgments about candidates would be best formed based on information about their actual performance²⁸.

✓ Behavioral questions

The use of behavioral questions in structured episodic interviews is designed to get the candidate to describe how he or she would behave in a situation identified as critical to performing well on the job. These questions are based on the assumption that past behavior in solving problems or responding to specific events is the best indicator of future behavior²⁹.

✓ Questions about capacity

The purpose of asking capability questions is to determine the extent of knowledge possessed by the candidate, his skills and how to use them, as well as his competencies. These questions can be open-ended, probing or closed-ended, depending on the needs, but they must always focus as closely as possible on the candidate's qualities in relation to the personal requirements. Thus, it is important to make sure that the capability questions are precise and center around what the candidate needs to know and be able to do. The purpose of asking them is also to determine the extent to which the candidate's qualities match each important area of the personnel requirements³⁰.

✓ Questions about motivation

Assessment of a candidate's degree of motivation, which requires considerable effort on the part of the interviewer, also poses a difficulty. This assessment is usually made not by asking direct questions, but by

²³ Ibid, p. 395

²⁴ Ibid, p. 396

²⁵ Gruszczynski L. *Questionnaires in sociology. Construction of tools for survey research. Script for students of social sciences*, University of Silesia, Katowice 1991, pp. 36 - 37

²⁶ Armstrong M. *Resource Management (...)* op. cit, pp. 396-397

²⁷ Gruszczynski L. *Questionnaire (...)* op. cit, p. 45 - 47

²⁸ Armstrong M. *Management(...)* op. cit, pp. 397-398

²⁹ Ibid, p. 398

³⁰ Ibid, p. 398

drawing conclusions from the answers obtained. Among the factors from which relevant conclusions can be drawn about the motivation of candidates are questions about career history, achievements, overcoming adversity, and interests and leisure activities³¹.

✓ Questions to ensure continuity of the conversation

Questions to ensure the continuity of the interview are designed to keep the conversation going uninterrupted and to encourage candidates to speak more broadly about the issues raised so far. Conducting a job interview is complex, so the best way to keep the conversation going is to interject short phrases at appropriate moments to encourage the candidate to continue speaking³².

✓ Feedback questions

Feedback questions test the extent to which the interviewer understands what the candidates have said. Based on what they said, the interviewer formulates an assertion and also asks the candidates if they agree with it³³.

✓ Career questions

Questions about the candidates' work history can provide some insight into the strength of their motivation, as well as determine the extent to which they have acquired useful and relevant knowledge, skills and experience³⁴.

✓ Questions about other interests

Questions about interests and hobbies on work experience should not be spent too much time, as they may prove to be unnecessary, however, they can provide some insight into the motivation of candidates, provided that the deep and dynamic nature of interests is discovered³⁵.

✓ Other questions

The last group of questions are useless questions and questions to avoid. Unhelpful questions do not provide any useful information, namely multiple-choice and guiding questions. On the other hand, questions that can be considered discriminatory should be avoided during an interview³⁶.

Interviewing skills

✓ Thread of understanding

A necessary part of any interview is to establish a thread of understanding with the candidate, "broadcasting on the same wave," relaxing the candidate, encouraging him to give answers and creating an atmosphere of general friendliness. If an understanding is reached, the candidate will be more comfortable talking about both his strengths and weaknesses. A good atmosphere for an interview is created by a certain way of greeting candidates, starting the interview, asking questions and responding to the answers given. Questions should not be asked in an aggressive manner or imply criticism of certain aspects of the candidate's career, as this is counterproductive³⁷. Body language is also important. The interviewer will establish a better rapport with the candidate and get more out of the interview if he or she maintains natural eye contact, avoids sitting down, and nods and interjects encouraging remarks as needed³⁸.

✓ Listening to

It is of great importance to be able to listen, as well as to understand what the candidates are saying. The interviewer should focus on what the candidates are trying to convey, extracting their main content from their answers, -and also summarize their statements at regular intervals, in order to gain confidence in their understanding of the content being conveyed³⁹.

✓ Maintaining continuity

If possible, in order to provide a logical structure to the interview and to collect a growing set of data, the question asked should be tied to the last answer given by the candidate⁴⁰.

✓ Maintaining control

When preparing for a job interview, make a plan, and then try to follow it. Candidates should talk as much as possible, but within certain limits. During the interview, it is necessary to focus on facts as much as possible, and

³¹ Armstrong M. *Resource Management(...)* op. cit, p. 399

³²Ibid, pp. 399-400

³³Ibid, p. 400

³⁴Ibid, p. 400

³⁵ Ibid, p. 400

³⁶ Armstrong M. *Resource Management(...)* op. cit, p. 401

³⁷Ibid, p. 402

³⁸Ibid, p. 402

³⁹Ibid, p. 402

⁴⁰Ibid, p. 402

in case the candidate jumps from topic to topic, a precise probing question should be asked, asking for an example illustrating a particular aspect of the interviewee's work⁴¹.

✓ Quotation

It is impossible to remember everything candidates say, so it is useful to write down the most important points of their statements discreetly, but not surreptitiously. However, it's worth asking the candidate if he or she doesn't mind taking notes, which will most likely make him or her feel that he or she is being treated with respect. On the other hand, candidates should not be discouraged by negative reflexes when taking notes that are unfavorable to them⁴².

Summary

The problem of effective personnel planning was and is an indispensable part of the management of any enterprise. Every owner makes every effort to ensure that the people employed achieve the established goals and strategies of the organization, thereby contributing to the growth of prestige and expansion of capital. A significant capital of any organization is personnel, or human capital, which is why the proper selection of employees is such an important element. For some time now, organizations have been making every effort to ensure that employees are not only properly educated and trained, but are a good fit with the company's mission. Large corporations, want to have an employee as if "on their own," so the goals of both the employer and the employee are important. People for whom professional success is not the most important thing would not be able to find their way in a large international organization. The recruitment and selection process is therefore a key element to check whether a candidate is the right person and in the right place.

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⁴¹Ibid, p. 403

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