



Recruitment and selection workshops and consultancy

Overview

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Introduction

"It's our people that make the difference" was a line much loved by writers of annual reports and advertising copy during the 1980s and early 1990s. Over-use eventually made it a platitude, yet it remains one of the key strategic considerations in managing organisational performance: if you have a critical mass of the right people, in the right jobs, your organisation will perform more effectively.

Even in a recession, good candidates will be in demand and have choices. You, therefore, need a process that will attract good candidates and motivate them to join your organisation, while weeding out and rejecting poor performers in a way that will not damage your corporate image.

The process begins and ends with Recruitment, which we can summarize as defining the job, generating suitable applications and persuading the best candidate to accept your offer. In the middle of the process is Selection, a set of methodologies and skills tailored to identifying, with the highest degree of confidence, the candidate with the most appropriate mix of skills, aptitudes, qualifications and experience.

The Huthwaite workshops and consultancy overviewed in this document address the complete spectrum of the Recruitment and Selection process. They are based on both original research and numerous investigations into best practice carried out in Europe, the UK and the USA since the mid 1980s.

Objectives

Huthwaite workshops and consultancy will give your organisation the ability to:

- make strategic staffing decisions – should you simply recruit, or maybe reorganise, redistribute tasks or redefine the job?
- use resources efficiently – who should be involved in the process?
- define accurately both the job to be filled and the ideal person to fill it
- attract a selection of good applicants, using appropriate media or agencies
- choose and use a range of assessment methods
- plan the logistics of the selection process according to the assessment method chosen
- plan, structure and control selection interviews
- use a skill model of effective interview questioning to elicit answers about key performance indicators
- monitor your recruitment and selection process to gather meaningful data and improve its effectiveness
- recruit and select effectively without infringing the law
- manage the process of rejecting candidates so that goodwill is maintained.

Workshops or consultancy or both?

Confucius said, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for life."

Recruitment and selection agencies give you a fish.

Huthwaite workshops will teach your people to fish – to find the right people for the right jobs. But, to continue the metaphor, do they also want to make their own fishing rod and hooks? Maybe it would be more sensible to buy these one-off items from a specialist supplier.

This is the philosophy behind Huthwaite's integration of workshops and consultancy. Those elements of the recruitment and selection process that have to be carried out regularly by a number of people in the organisation – usually job definition and selection interviewing – can be taught, discussed and refined in a workshop. Other tasks, which require more specialised skills and would take longer to train yet are used only infrequently, can be bought-in as consultancy. Reorganising staffing structures or designing assessment centres might fall into this latter category.

The keynote is flexibility. The client decides which approach is more appropriate.

Workshops

Target audience

Anyone who wishes to improve the effectiveness of the way they plan, prepare and carry out the recruitment and selection process, especially the selection interview.

Content

Workshops use a modular format to meet the exact requirements of the client's target audience. Those modules (displayed opposite) that are absolutely fundamental to the recruitment and selection process are classified as Core modules; others, which clients variously address through either workshops or consultancy are classified Elective.

Design and methodology

Workshops focus on jobs for which the participants are most likely to recruit. Tasks and exercises give theoretical knowledge of planning methods and also produce practical templates which participants can use on-the-job. Interviewing skills are refined through a series of roleplay and review cycles: participants roleplay and audiotape an interview using a real CV.

Aided by the Huthwaite facilitator, participants then make a behaviour analysis of their performance and review it against the researched model of effective interviewer behaviour.

Material

Participants receive a complete set of documentation, which they may photocopy, to assist them in structuring, planning and preparation. They also take away a library of reference material giving explanation of key concepts.

Duration

Two days are required to cover the Core modules. Other designs will vary in duration depending on the range of modules the client requires.

Faculty and group size

Facilitated by a senior Huthwaite consultant, workshops have a maximum of twelve participants to ensure individual attention. Additional consultants and behaviour analysts are available to assist with coaching, skill analysis and feedback.



Workshop modules

Core modules

Deciding what you are looking for

- What are the major responsibilities and activities involved in the position?
- What knowledge, skills and abilities are needed to carry these out well?
- What are the standards of acceptable performance to use?
- Are there any personal factors that would rule candidates out or make them particularly attractive?

Structuring and controlling the interview

- How can you establish and maintain the right atmosphere?
- What are the key areas you should cover? In what sequence?
- What should you say about your organisation, and when?
- Roles of multiple interviewers.
- How should you close the interview?
- Interpersonal skills for control and clarity.

Getting the answers you need

- What sort of questions will tell you how well a candidate will actually perform the job?
- The Success Model: different types of questions, key ratios for their use, planning cycles of questions.
- How do you assess motives and attitudes?
- What questions should you avoid?

Elective modules

Recruitment – before you begin

- Do you need to recruit at all?
- Should you re-appoint to the same specification or re-assess workloads and redistribute tasks to create a different recruitment need?
- **Must** you fill the vacancy now, even if there is no ideal candidate, or can you appoint no one and try again?
- Who should play what part in the assessment and administration process, and why?

Attracting good applicants

- Have you the time and experience to do it yourself or will you involve outside specialists?
- How can you write and design advertisements to attract the candidates you want?
- What are the pros, cons and costs of different advertising media?

Choosing and using assessment methods

- Cracking short-listing: what can CVs, application forms and references tell you?
- Should you rely purely on interview by telephone and/or in person? How do you make interviews more predictive?
- What tests can you use to assess the criteria and standards you have defined for knowledge, skills and abilities?
- Is it worth using an assessment centre? How do you design and implement one?

Elective modules continued

Planning the day(s)

- How should you handle the candidates' arrival?
- Setting and maintaining the right atmosphere.
- Options for room layouts and panel interviews.
- How should the candidates be briefed?
- How and when will you give the candidates your decision?
- Feedback: how much, when and how should you give it?

Monitoring your recruitment process

- What data should you collect?
- What key information must the data give you?
- Using the information to make the process more effective.

Staying within the law

- Conscious and unconscious discriminatory practices.
- Ensuring criteria, standards and assessment methods are non-discriminatory.
- What data should you gather and keep to rebut challenges to your selection process?

Rejection procedures

- Rejection as a PR function.
- Combining feedback and rejection – what is appropriate?
- Creating model rejection letters for your organisation.

Consultancy services

Some organisations still have a negative view of consultants: *"It's only common sense; we'll do it ourselves."* Yet it is significant that the world's largest and most successful corporations are also the heaviest users of consultancy services. They have realised that in many situations they can achieve a higher quality outcome, at a lower overall cost, by using external consultants.

Huthwaite clients tend to use our recruitment and selection consultancy when one or more of three conditions exist:

- **A task occurs only occasionally** – but when it does it would require a very large (and disruptive) investment of management time and expertise to handle it effectively. Departmental or organisational restructuring or reallocation of responsibilities is a typical example.
- **Specialist skills are not available internally** – how many engineering companies, for instance, have anyone who is experienced in writing advertising copy or qualified to administer and interpret psychometric tests?
- **A very high quality outcome is essential** – such situations could include the recruitment of one or two board-level senior managers or, at the other extreme, the design of an assessment centre to recruit 1,000 production operatives for a greenfield factory start-up. In either case there is no margin for error.

Below, we have listed some of the specific areas in which Huthwaite's consultancy adds significant value to clients' recruitment and selection processes.

Strategic staff planning

- Turning vacancies into opportunities to improve productivity and service.
- Job enrichment through delegation and better job design.
- Job evaluation and remuneration planning.

Job descriptions

- An exhaustive, competence-based approach for where the job description must be absolutely comprehensive and accurate.
- Interviews and behavioural research to identify the key personal, functional and behavioural competencies.
- Performance standards for each competence, defined in terms of behaviour or other measurable criteria.

Advertising

- Media selection: for optimum response and compliance with equal opportunities guidelines.
- Advertising design and copywriting: to achieve maximum impact and readability while screening out unsuitable candidates.

Selection

- Design of application forms to simplify and improve the accuracy of short-listing.
- Creation of structured interviewing instruments, based on job competencies, for situations where interview consistency is desirable or legally necessary.
- Selecting and administering psychometric tests.
- Design of assessment and development centres including tests, simulations and supporting material.
- Management of assessment centres using Huthwaite consultants or the client's own (suitably trained) staff.

Monitoring systems

- Design of basic systems to demonstrate legal compliance.
- Monitoring advertising media and copy for response and value.
- Longitudinal appraisal systems to assess and refine the predictive power of the selection process.

