

METHOD OF INDIVIDUAL SELECTION INTERVIEW

László GULYÁS- Enikő TURCSÁNYI

UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED, COLLEGE FACULTY OF FOOD ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD INDUSTRIAL ECONOMICS AND MARKETING

SUMMARY

One of the most important function of human resource management is selecting employees. In present days the human resource managers are using very large scale of selections ways, for example application forms, interviews, aptitude test, personality test, assessment centres, etc. But the interview remains one of the most common and popular ways of selecting people. Even tough it has been subjected to a number of criticism.

The selection interview has different types. One of them is the individual interview, and our paper we dealing with the method of this type of interview. We examine the process of individual interview from preparing the interview to the final rating.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Definition

A selection interview is an extension and development of the inevitable meeting which takes place between an employer and prospective employee (*Graham and Benet 1995*).

According to another definition a selection interview is a controlled conversation with an applicant for the job and the employer, or someone representing the employer, designed to test the suitability of the applicant for the job in question (*Cushway 1994*).

Our opinion is, that a well-conducted selection interview fulfills three functions (*Karoliny et. al. 2003*):

1. To elicit information about the candidate's motives and behaviour in order to asses personality.
2. To check the factual information the candidate has already given about himself (or herself) to examine the value and relevance of experience and qualifications.
3. To give information to the candidate about the job and company. This part of the interview is very often omitted or skimped, but it is quite essential. Selection is mutual: the employer selects the candidate, and the candidate must be given the information needed to select the employer.

1.2. Description of this paper

Selection interview can take a number of different forms. There are three types of interviewes according to the number of interviewers. (*Graham and Benet 1995; Cushway 1994; Karoliny et al. 2003; Sonnenblick et al.; 1997; Weiss 1988*):

1. **The individual interview**

One candidate and one interviewer (*Weiss 1988*).

2. **Sequential interviews**

One candidate and two or more interviewers. In this method the candidate is seen by one interviewer, then by second and then by third (rarely more). This is a series of individual interviews. Sequential interviews are useful as they can give the employer a broader picture of the candidate and they also allow the applicant to have a contact with a greater number of potential bosses and colleagues (*Torrington-Hall 1987*).

3. **Multiple interviews**

This type of interview has two forms:

A/ panel interviews: when the candidate seen by a comparatively small number of people simultaneously. The usual membership of panel is three or four.

B/ board interviews: when the candidate seen by a comparatively large number of people simultaneously. The usual membership of board is five or more.

In this paper we examine only the method of individual interview.

2. THE PROCESS OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

Our opinion is that the individual interview consists of three parts:

1. preparing for the interview
2. making the interview
3. assessment the interview.

In the next part of our paper we will investigate these parts in details:

2.1 Preparing for the interview

Before the interview the interviewer have to prepare for interview, which means the following (*Graham and Benet 1995; Cushway 1994*).

1. The interviewer has to read all necessary documentation especially the job description and the personal specification.
2. The interviewer has to take care, that written information about candidate is obtained.
3. The interviewer has compare to candidate's written statement with the job specification. So the interviewer can decide where clarification or further information is needed.
4. The interviewer has to make notes of the key questions to be asked.
5. The interviewer has to make sure that the interview will not be interrupted by visitors or telephone calls.
6. The interviewer has to take care about place of interview, using two chairs with a low table between them.
7. The interviewer has to make an appropriate arrangements for the reception of applicants, in particular giving them somewhere to sit, and make sure that the reception staff knows that they are coming.

2.2. Making the interview

The interviewer needs to work systematically through the structure that has been planned.

Table 1. Interview structure

| Interview stage | Objectives | Activities |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Beginning | Put the candidate at ease Develop rapport and Set the scene | Greet the candidate by name Introduce him/herself Neutral chat Agree interview purpose |
| Middle | To collect and give information, maintain rapport | Asking questions within a structure |
| End | Close the interview and confirm future action | Summarize the interview Check that candidate has no more question Indicate what happens next and when |

Source: Torrington-Hall 1987. 320. p.

We have some note for the "Table 1." (Cushway 1994; Graham and Benet 1995; Pintér 2002; Telkes 2003): In part of the beginning the interviewer welcomes the candidate and introduce himself (or herself). Very important part of the beginning is the neutral chat. Most experienced interviewers begin the interview with a few remarks and question designed to welcome and set a candidate at ease. For example, a question about the candidate's journey to the place of the interview, helps the break the ice.

After the beginning will start the middle part of interview, when the interviewer makes the questions. The object of the question is to get a candidate to talk about their experience and reveal their motivations, social adjustment and the ways in which they have dealt with any difficult episodes in their private or working lives. These rules should be followed:

I. Rules about questions

1. *Questions should not suggest their own answer or be answerable in a very few words.* For example: I' am sure you have had experience in stocktaking, haven't you? Open-ended questions are the best, they suggest no particular answer and encourage the candidate to talk at some length. For example: Tell me about any stocktaking experience you have had.
2. *Very large of number of question should begin with the words how and why.*
3. *The meaning of questions should be clear.* The interviewer must try to adapt his or her manner and choice of the words to suit the candidate.
4. *Probing questions should be used.*
If a candidate says he or she was a responsible for a certain activity, this must not be taken at its face value. Further question may show that the responsibility was confined to keeping records about it.
5. *Rude, insensitive and irrelevant question should not be asked.*

II. Rules about interviewer behaviour

1. *The interviewer should unobtrusively guide.*
The candidate should do most of the talking, but on subjects which have been chosen and introduced by interviewer.
2. *Interviewer should not compare candidates with themselves.*
3. *Inappropriate selection criteria must be avoided.*
Particularly avoid the „halo effect”, whereby the interviewer assume that one desirable characteristic in an applicant necessarily means, that the candidate is equally worthy in other respect. For example, an attractive physical appearance does not imply that an applicant for a secretary’s job will be a good typist

III. Other rules

1. *The interviewer should try to keep timetable.* It seems often to be the norm that the interviews overrun. That is both bad planning and bad manners, as candidates presumably have other commitments as well.
2. *The interviewer should follow a clear structure.* It means the interview has a beginning, middle and end.

In the last part – we called the end stage - of the interview the interviewer should be given opportunity for candidate to ask questions about the job or the organisation. Finally the interviewer should indicate clearly to the candidate when the interview is at the end, and what the next step will be. For example the candidate will receive a letter or should telephone the company on a certain day.

3. ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERVIEW

3.1. Recording the interview

Note taking during the interview should be avoided, but a full note should be taken immediately after the interview and certainly before the next candidate is seen (*Cushway 1994*). It is essential for the record to be made in a systematic way to be sure that the comments have been made on all important points and to enable comparison with other candidates, there are many systems for describing candidates, two of which are the follows:

Table 2. Two typical systems for describing candidates

| The seventh-point plan of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology devised by A. Rodger | The five-fold grading devised by Munro Fraser |
|---|--|
| Physical make-up | First impression and physical make-up |
| Attainments | Qualifications |
| General intelligence | brain abilities |
| Special aptitudes | Motivation |
| Interests | Adjustment |
| Disposition | |
| Circumstances | |

Source: Author’s own construction
(based on A. Rodger 1952 and J. Munro Fraser 1958)

Two problems arise when applying these systems:

1. Subjective and incorrect allocation of people categories, for example what seems a pleasant disposition to one person may appear as surly and aggressive to someone else.
2. Applying the same categories to candidates of widely varying background, experience and educational qualifications.

3.2. Assessing the candidate and final rating

The information given by the candidate and recorded by the interviewer must now be interpreted so that suitability for the job can be assessed. It is now comparatively easy to make an objective judgement about the candidate's experience and qualifications, particularly if question on these subjects have been carefully thought out in advance. Assessment of personality is much less reliable (*McKenna-Beech 1995*).

It is useful to conclude the written assessment of the candidate with a final rating, particularly if a number of candidates are to be seen over a period (*Graham and Benet 1995*). A five-point scale can be used:

Table 3. Final rating

| Category | Assessment |
|----------|--|
| A | Outstanding candidate! |
| B | very good candidate but... |
| C | good candidate but... |
| D | needs further consideration because... |
| E | Unacceptable because... |

Source: Author's own construction

REFERENCES

1. L. L. Byars-L. W. Rue(1991): Human Resource Management. Richard Irwin Inc. Homewood, Illinois, USA.
2. B. Cushway (1994): Human Resource Management. Kogan Page Limited. London.
3. H.G. Henemann et al.(1986): Personnel/ Human Resource Management. Richard D. Irwin, Inc. Homewood, Illinois, USA.
4. H.T. Graham – R. Benet (1995): Human Resource Management. Longman Group. London.
5. Karoliny Mártonné et al.(2003): Emberi erőforrásmenedzsment kézikönyv. Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó-Kerszöv Kiadó. Budapest.
6. E. McKenna-N. Beech (1995): The essence of human resource management. Prentice Hall Europe. London.
7. J. Munro Fraser (1958): A Handbook of employment interviewing. Macdonalds and Evans. London.
8. Pintér Zs.(2002) : Hogyan csináljunk karriert? HVG Könyvkiadó. Budapest.
9. Rodger (1952): The seven-point plan of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology. London.
10. C. Sonnenblick-M. Basciano-K. Crabbe (1997): Job hunting made easy. Learning Express. New York.
11. Telkes J. (2003): Állásvásárlás. Bagolyvár Könyvkiadó. Budapest.
12. D. Torrington – L. Hall (1987): Personnel Management – A new Approach. Prentice Hall International (UK) Ltd. London.
13. D. H. Weiss (1988): How to be a successful interviewer. ACOM. New York.