

ISSUES IN RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

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ABSTRACT

The importance and purpose of recruitment stresses the need to attract and encourage more and more candidates to apply in the organization. This creates a talent pool of candidates to enable the selection of best candidates for the organization. It includes determining present and future requirements of the organization in conjunction with its personnel planning and job analysis activities. Thus, it is the process which links the employers with the employees. It helps to increase the pool of job candidates at minimum cost. It helps increase the success rate of selection process by decreasing number of visibly under qualified or overqualified job applicants. Thus, it helps reduce the probability that job applicants once recruited and selected will leave the organization only after a short period of time. It meets the organizations legal and social obligations regarding the composition of its workforce. It begins identifying and preparing potential job applicants who will be appropriate candidates. Finally, it increases organization and individual effectiveness of various recruiting techniques and sources for all types of job applicants. The paper attempts to highlight the Recruitment & selection processes in ten organizations across sectors in the Indian scenario. It examines issues in the recruitment and selection processes and offers suggestions.

KEYWORDS

Recruitment, Employment, Selection, Staffing, Manpower planning, Human resource planning, Job analysis

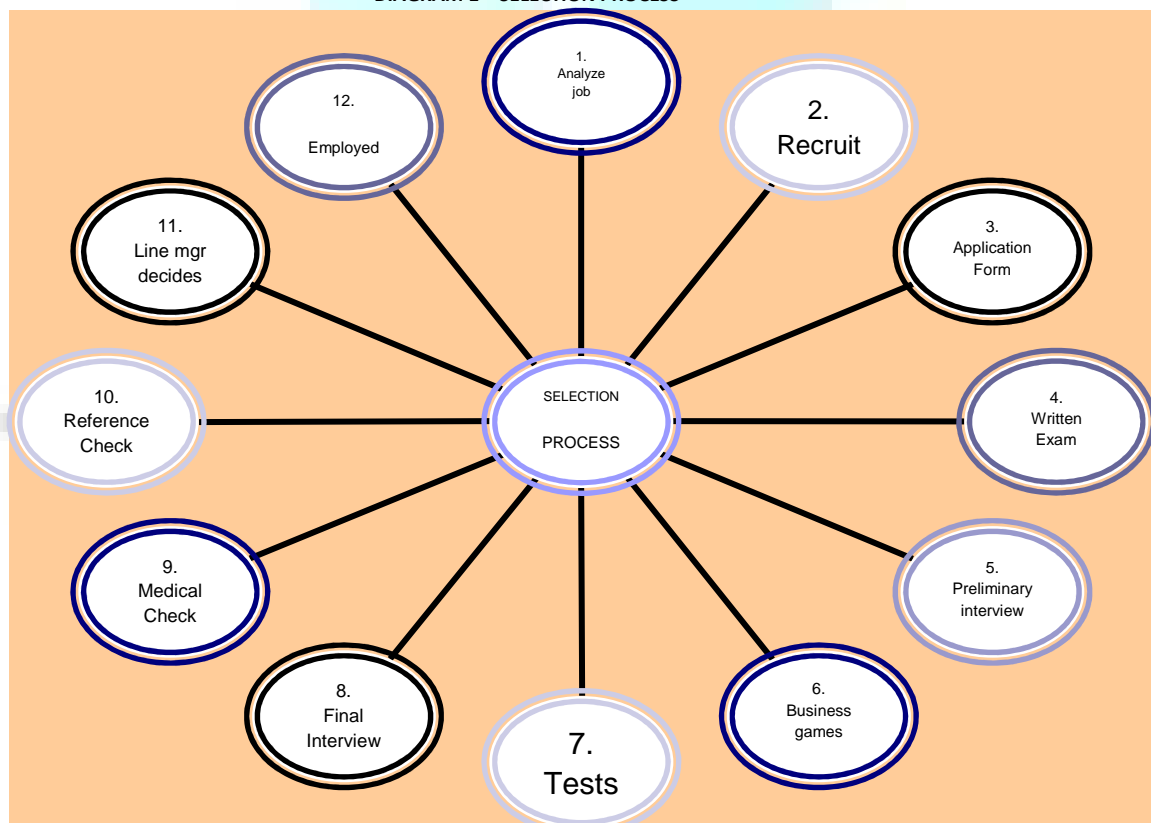
INTRODUCTION

Recruitment is an important part of an organization's human resource planning and their competitive strength. Competent human resources at the right positions in the organization are a vital resource and can be a core competency or a strategic advantage for it.

The objective of the recruitment process is to obtain the number and quality of employees that can be selected in order to help the organization to achieve its goals and objectives. With the same objective, recruitment helps to create a pool of prospective employees for the organization so that the management can select the right candidate for the right job from this pool. Recruitment acts as a link between the employers and the job seekers and ensures the placement of right candidate at the right place at the right time. Using and following the right recruitment processes can facilitate the selection of the best candidates for the organization. Thus, according to Edwin B. Flippo, recruitment is the process of searching the candidates for employment and stimulating them to apply for jobs in the organization".

Following next, is a long process of Selection, commencing from the preliminary interview of the applicants and ending with the contract of employment. Thus, selection is to identify the individual, who *can* most successfully perform the job from the pool of *qualified candidates*.

Diagram 1 shows a generalized selection process. In practice, the process differs among organizations and between two different jobs within the same company. Selection procedure for senior managers will be long-drawn and rigorous, but it is simple and short while hiring shop-floor workers.

DIAGRAM 1 – SELECTION PROCESS



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OBJECTIVE

The objective of the research is to emphasize the importance of the process of the recruitment and selection function. After this, we need to understand the challenges it encounters and find a solution to meet these challenges.

METHODOLOGY

The Research Methodology is based on primary data available through interviewing around ten Personnel managers. It also includes secondary data available through various web-site portals, books and e-articles. The assimilation of the information is used to suggest ways and means to face the arising challenges of the processes involved in the recruitment and selection function.

FINDINGS**RECRUITMENT**

There are several sources of recruitment and they may be broadly categorized into (i) internal, and (ii) external. (See diagram 2)

INTERNAL RECRUITMENT

Internal recruitment seeks applicants for positions from those who are currently employed. Internal Sources include present employees, employee referrals, former employees, and former applicants.

Present employees: Promotions and transfers from among the present employees can be a good source of recruitment. Promotion to higher positions has several advantages. They are –

1. It is good public relations
2. It builds morale.

However, promotion can be dysfunctional to the firm as the advantage of hiring outsiders who may be better skilled and qualified is denied.

Employee referrals: Employees can develop good prospects for their families and friends by acquainting them with the advantages of a job with the company, furnishing cards of introduction, and even encouraging them to apply.

There are some potential negative factors associated with employee referrals. They include the possibility of inbreeding, manifesting in groups of people quitting one firm and joining another. They carry with them the cultural practices of the other firms. They form cliques of their own, demand unacceptable privileges and often threaten to quit if demands are not met.

Former Employees: Former employees are also an internal source of applicants. Some retired employees are willing to work on a part-time basis or may recommend someone who would be interested in working for the company. An advantage with this source is that the performance of these people is already known.

Previous Applicants: Although not truly an internal source, those who have previously applied for jobs can be contracted by mail, a quick and inexpensive way to fill an unexpected opening.

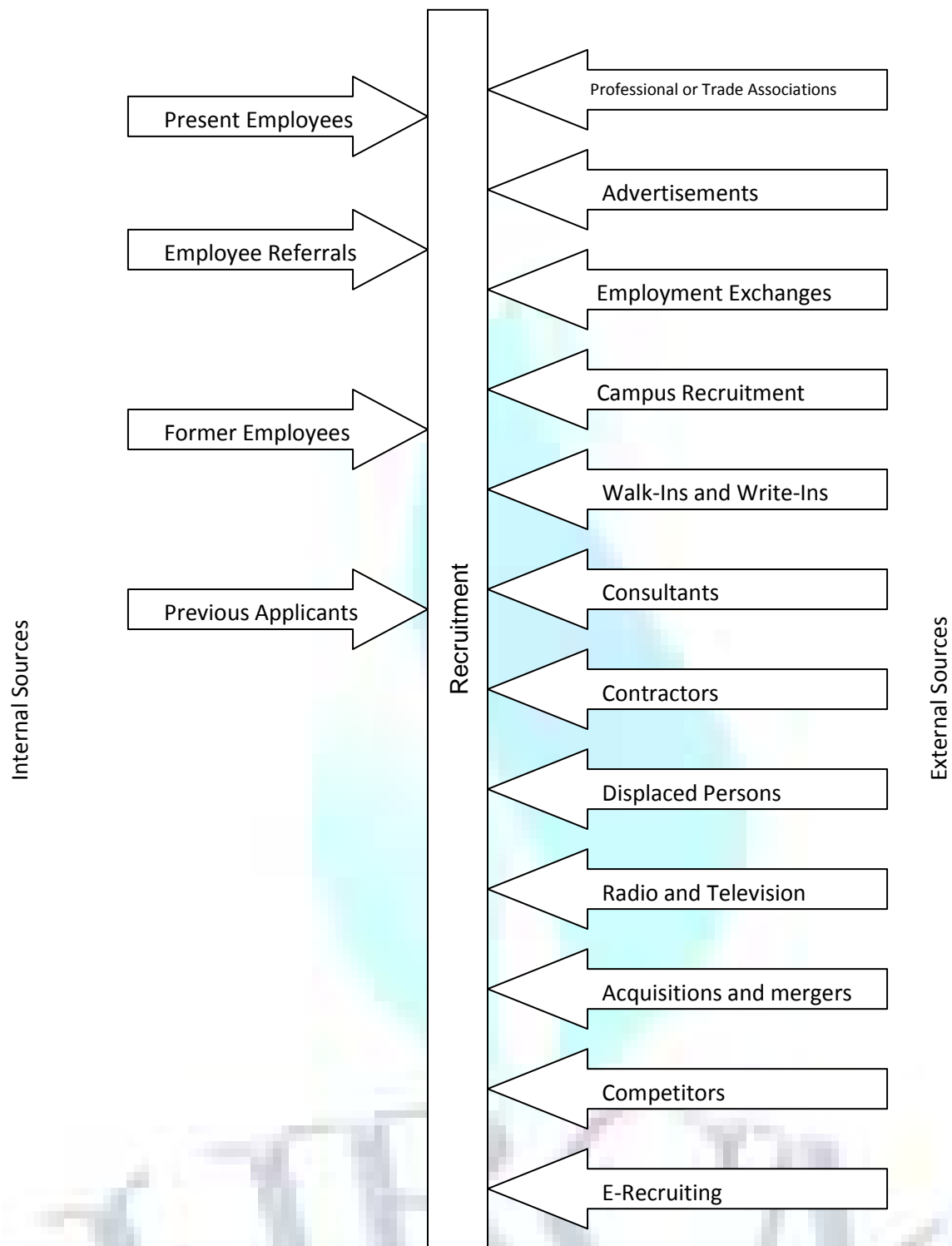


Diagram 2 - Sources of Recruitment

EXTERNAL RECRUITMENT

External sources far outnumber the internal methods. Specifically, sources external to a firm are:

Professional or Trade Associations: They maintain complete bio-data of their members and organizations find this source more useful to recruit executives, managers & engineers.

Advertisements: Want ads describe the job and the benefits, identify the employer, and tell those who are interested and how to apply.

Employment Exchanges: The Government set up Public Employment Exchanges in the country to provide information about vacancies to the candidates and to help the organizations in finding out suitable candidates.

Campus Recruitment: Most of the Universities, colleges and Institutes imparting Technical Education in various disciplines provide facilities for campus recruitment and selection. Organizations can directly contact the institutes and stimulate the candidates to apply for jobs.

Walk-Ins, Write-Ins and Talk-Ins: Candidates apply casually for jobs through mail or hand-over the Applications in Personnel Department.

Consultants: Consultants in India perform the recruitment on behalf of a client company by charging a fee. Organizations depend on this source for highly specialized positions and executive positions.

Contractors: Contractors are used to recruit casual workers. The names of the workers are not entered in the company records and, to this extent, difficulties experienced in maintaining permanent workers are avoided.

Displaced persons: Implementation of a project in an area would result in displacement of several hundred inhabitants. Rehabilitating the displaced people is a social responsibility of business.

Radio and Television: Companies in the private sector are hesitant to use the media because of high costs and also because they fear that such advertising will make the companies look desperate and damage their conservative image.

Acquisitions and Mergers: When organizations combine into one, they have to handle a large pool of employees, some of whom may no longer be necessary in the new organization. As a result of the merger, new jobs may be created. Both new and old jobs may be readily staffed by drawing the best-qualified applicants from this employee pool.

Competitors: Rival firms can be a source of recruitment. There are legal and ethical issues involved in 'raiding', this method involves identifying the right people in rival companies, offering them better terms and luring them away.

E-recruiting: There are respective company websites devoted in some manner to job posting activities. There are negatives associated with Internet recruiting. For example, broader exposure might result in many unqualified applicants applying for jobs. More resumes need to be reviewed, more e-mails dealt with and specialized applicant tracking software may be needed to handle the large number of applicants. Another problem is that the recruiters are likely to miss out many competent applications that lack access to Internet.

SELECTION PROCESS

In practice, the selection process differs among organizations and between two different jobs within the same company. Selection procedure for senior managers will be long-drawn and rigorous, but it is simple and short while hiring shop-floor workers.

Environmental Factors affecting selection

Selection is influenced by several factors. More prominent among them are supply and demand of specific skills in the labour market, unemployment rate, labour-market conditions, legal and political considerations, company's image, company's policy, Human resource planning and cost of hiring. The last three constitute the internal environment and the remaining form the external environment of the selection process.

Preliminary Interview:

The purpose of the preliminary interview is the elimination of unqualified applicants. Scrutiny enables the HR specialists to eliminate unqualified job seekers based on the information supplied in their application forms.

Selection Tests:

Job seekers who pass the screening and preliminary interview are called for tests. Different types of tests may be administered, depending on the job and the company. Generally, tests are used to determine the applicant's ability, aptitude and personality. Interest tests, graphology tests, medical tests and genetic screening are also some of the tests done. Tests must be chosen based on the criteria of reliability, validity, objectivity and standardization.

Reliability refers to the standardisation of the procedure of administering and scoring the test results. A person who takes a test one day and makes a certain score should be able to take the same the next day or the next week and make more or less the same score. An individual's intelligence, for example, is generally a stable characteristic. So if we administer an intelligence test, a person who scores 110 in March would score close to 110 if tested in July. Tests which produce wide variations in results serve little purpose in selection.

Validity is a test which helps predict whether a person will be successful in a given job. A test that has been validated can be helpful in differentiating between prospective employees who will be able to perform the job well and those who will not. Naturally, not test will be 100 per cent accurate in predicting job success. A validated test increases possibility of success.

There are three ways of validating a test. The first is 'concurrent validity'. This involves determining the factors that are characteristic of successful employees and then using these factors as the yardsticks. 'Predictive validity' involves using a selection test during the selection process and then identifying the successful candidates. The characteristics of both successful and less-successful candidates are then identified. 'Synthetic validity' involves taking parts of several similar jobs rather than one complete job to validate the selection test.

Benefits of a validated test are obvious from Diagram. 3. Individuals who score 40 and above are successful employees. Those who score less than 40 are unsuccessful. As noted from the figure, the test is not absolutely accurate. A small number of workers who score below 40 are good workers. Also some participants scoring above 40 are less successful. Hence, test results should serve as only one of several criteria in the selection decision.

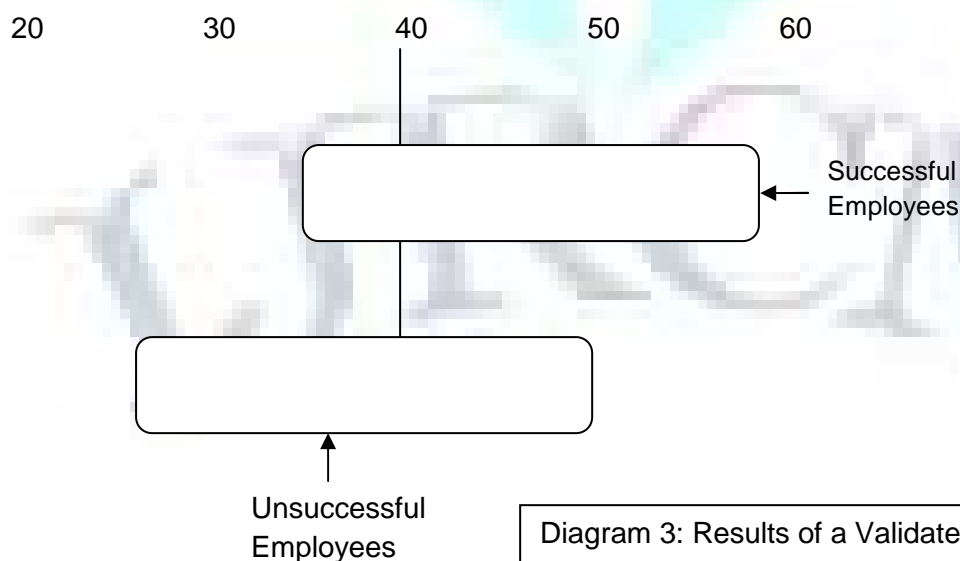


Diagram 3: Results of a Validated Test

Employment Interview:

The next step in the selection process is employment interview. As seen in Diagram 4, an interview is conducted at the beginning and at the end of the selection process. The emphasis here is on the latter. Interview is a formal, in-depth conversation conducted to evaluate the applicant's acceptability. It is to be considered as an excellent selection device. However, interviews do have shortcomings. Absence of reliability, lack of validity and standardisation are some of the limitations. Finally, biasness of interviewers may cloud the objectivity of the interviewers. The employment interview can be (i) one-to-one, (ii) sequential, or (iii) panel. Interview has at least three objectives – (i) helps obtain additional information from the applicant; (ii) facilitates giving general information to the applicant such as company policies, job, products manufactured and the like; and (iii) helps build the company's image among the applicants. Interviews can be of different types. The usual types are structured, unstructured, mixed, behavioural and stress-producing.

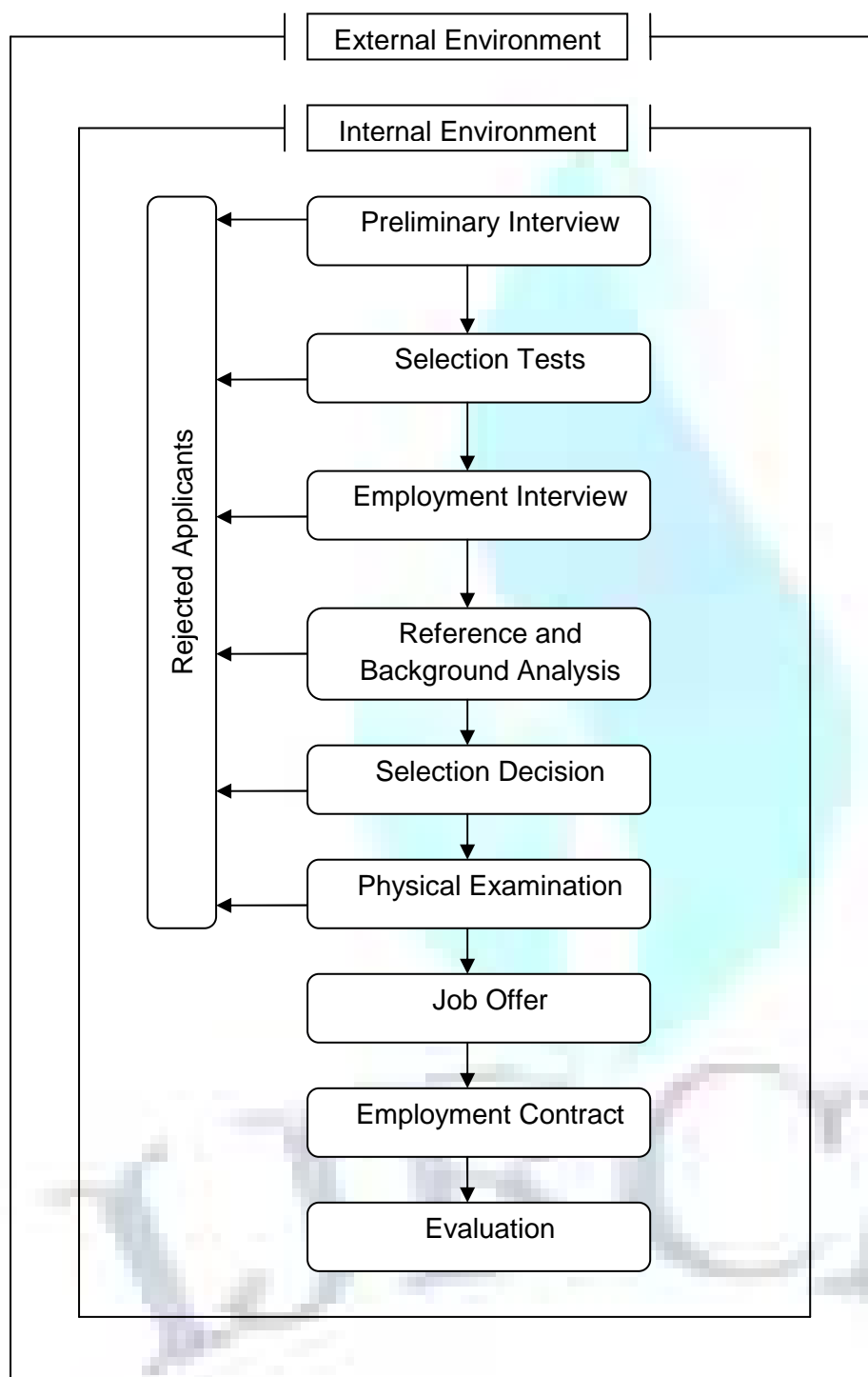


Diagram 4: Elaborate Selection Process

Reference and Background checks:

Many employers request names, addresses, telephone numbers or references for the purpose of verifying information and perhaps, gaining additional background information on an applicant. Although listed on the application form, references are not usually checked until an applicant has successfully reached the fourth stage of a sequential selection process. Reference checks serve two important purposes. One purpose is to gain insight about the potential employee from the people who have had previous experience with him or her. The second purpose for reference checks is to assess the potential success of a prospect.

Selection Decision:

After obtaining information through the preceding steps, selection decision – the most critical of all the steps – must be made. The final decision has to be made from the pool of individuals who pass the tests, interviews and reference checks.

Physical Examination:

After the selection decision and before the job offer is made, the candidate is required to undergo a physical fitness test. A job offer is, often, contingent upon the candidate being declared fit after the physical examination. The results of the medical fitness test are recorded in a statement and are preserved in the personnel records.

Job offer:

The next step in the selection process is job offer (see Diagram. 4) to those applicants who have crossed all the previous hurdles. Job offer is made through a letter of appointment. Such a letter generally contains a date by which the appointee must report on duty.

Contracts of Employment:

After the job offer has been made and the candidates accept the offer, certain documents need to be executed by the employer and the candidate. One such document is the attestation form. This form contains certain vital details about the candidate which are authenticated and attested by him/ her. There is also a need for preparing a contract of employment. The basic information that should be included in a written contract of employment will vary according to the level of the job.

Evaluation of the Selection Programme:

The broad test of the selection process is the quality of the personnel hired. A firm must have competent and committed personnel. The selection process, if properly done, will ensure availability of such employees.

Thus, the selection process has been discussed in detail.

Similarly, on collating the data from the ten Indian organizations, a summary of the findings is illustrated in Tables 1 to 10 below below:

TABLE 1

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Industrial fragrance and flavor creator and bulk manufacturer.	The recruitment policies, sources & methods have to be evaluated from time to time.	Successful recruitment program shows good number of successful placements, number of offers made, and number of applicants, Cost involved and time taken for filling up the position.

TABLE 2

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
International School	Recruitment strategy must provide two-pronged value proposition : (1) Attracts high-caliber teachers who get great results (e.g. marked gains in their students' achievement) (2) Promotes high levels of retention of top teachers, who stay, develop, improve and lead over time.	Equal Employment Opportunity is on the basis of individual merit and without regard to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity, marital status, national origin, parental status, race, and religion, and sexual orientation, source of income or veteran status. Workshops support to pursue further studies and monthly Speaker Series events by academics, elected officials, and heads of industry are done. For new recruits, mentoring & guidance by a veteran teacher in the school for their first six months, in order to ensure quality modeling, coaching and evaluation of new hires, and those new teachers receive the support and guidance they require to feel maximally successful during their first few years in the classroom.

TABLE 3

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Diverse business interests of Real Estate, Infrastructure, Financial Services and Power sectors	The success of recruitment process is evaluated through the performance of the candidate over a period of time.	Evaluation is done on various criteria.

TABLE 4

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Customer Contact Centre	To exclude poor applicants to avoid counter-productive work.	By including applicants with promising potentials.

TABLE 5

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Automotive	The primary objective is to ensure that the brightest talent is attracted to the Company and enthusiastically participate in the hiring process, leading to potential selection and on boarding of the new face.	To ensure the employer brand is effectively and efficiently leveraged so that the odds of selecting and on boarding of high caliber students improves significantly.

TABLE 6

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Tele-communications	To bring in more effectiveness in the recruitment process	Uses methods like Video conference for following reasons of time savings, faster decision making, cost savings in candidate travel, lodging, etc. and an opportunity to meet the candidates before narrowing the list

TABLE 7

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Financial Services	Selection process is used to narrow the number of candidates effectively.	Reducing the cycle time of recruitment, Keeping the C.V's of rejected candidates & calling them back when ever a vacancy occurs (if they are suitable for the job) to save time. Always 3-6 committee members may not be required as they need to elect a committee then train them, so it is suggested for smaller posts, a committee of 2 people would suffice.

TABLE 8

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Pharmaceutical	Increase the success rate of selection process by decreasing number of under qualified or overqualified job applicants.	An assessment of character and performance of the candidate through previous / current employer through reference checks.

TABLE 9

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Banking Services	The selection process for jobs at the banking firm is quite stringent.	The process consists of a Written test divided into four sections of Test of Reasoning, Quantitative Aptitude, General Awareness and English.

TABLE 10

Organization/ Industry	Recruitment Challenges	Recruitment Solutions
Multi-disciplinary management and engineering consultancy firm	Best candidate on Time at optimum cost.	Defining responsibilities of HRD, discipline Heads of all departments and functional Heads in respect of Recruitment to minimize lead time.

CONCLUSION

Let us conclude that the recruitment and selection process across ten organizations in the Indian context have been emphasized. The various challenges faced by these organizations have been highlighted along with the necessary solutions. The identity of the organizations has been concealed for privacy concerns.

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