TAMPERE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

HOW TO IMPROVE THE RECRUIT MENT PROCESS

MML-Group

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ABSTRACT

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Successful recruiting is one of the most important operations in a modern-day company. Finding the right employees for the right positions is crucial also for MML-Group. In MML-Group's case it is also fundamental that the process of hiring new workforce can be executed quickly.

The objective of this study was to find ways to improve the overall quality of the recruitment process and make it less time-consuming for the people involved in the process.

A questionnaire was sent to the back office workers of MML-Group to find out where the points of focus would be. Total of eight people answered the survey with a varied range of knowledge on the subject. The study is heavily depending on three respondents who were most in touch with the subject and possessed a meaningful amount of information. In addition to the survey the study is based on theoretical frame of reference.

Data gathered from the survey indicated that there are many opinions as to where the problems lie. The HR coordinator stated that the areas most in need of development were of a practical nature, concerning the use of electronic databases and tools. Others who held managerial positions and had more of a supervisory role, thought the problems were more along the lines of interview quality and personal schedule issues.

In order to improve the quality of the recruitment process at MML-Group, more standardized methods and practices have to be implemented and used throughout the process.

Key words: human resources, recruiting, recruitment,

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation and purpose of research

The subject for this research, was given to me by the CEO of MML-Group, Henri Memonen. During my internship at the company, and especially the last few months I have been involved to some degree in human resource matters so the subject seemed a fitting one to conclude my work.

MML-Group is constantly looking for new workforce especially to suit their needs in the construction sector. A lot of the jobs available are projects so there is also a need for temporary workers. The importance of a cost effective and time saving recruitment of new workers can’t be emphasized enough. In filling temporary positions the recruiting party has to remind themselves that even though the project might be a short one, the quality of the recruiting process will be clearly visible in the quality of the work.

1.2 MML-Group

MML-Group is a company that is working on two different fields. One side of the company provides human resources services and the other side imports tools of various brands and kinds to Finland. One of the strengths of MML-Group is its ability to provide complete packages of workforce and the necessary tools to complete a project. This helps to create strong customer relationships with certain companies. MML-Group is a relatively new company but has experienced steady growth through its existence in the market since it was founded in 2007.

1.3 Objectives and methodology

The main objective of this thesis is to give tools to the company to make their recruiting process more efficient without compromising the quality of it. This objective was accomplished largely by researching the current way of conducting recruitment of new employees. A questionnaire was issued to every back office worker in the company to find out where the points of focus lie. Together with analyzing the data collected from the survey and applying the theories of HRM the author was able to present the company with suggestions for improvement. The questionnaire was planned and conducted through MML-Group's own survey tool with the assistance of the company's program designer. In total, eight people submitted answers to the questionnaire. Out of those eight, only three people were qualified and involved enough to give meaningful answers. Those three respondents answers are the ones analyzed in this thesis. As only eight people responded to the survey the amount of data was small enough to be exported and analyzed via Microsoft Excel.

1.3.1 Qualitative or quantitative research?

One of the first big decisions when conducting a research is to choose if the research is qualitative or quantitative. Qualitative and quantitative way of executing a research vary immensely. Depending on the nature of the research at hand one way is usually more suitable than the other.

According to an article written by Susan E. Wyse at snapsurveys.com qualitative research is more of an exploratory research. It is useful in gaining information about underlying reasons, motivations and opinions. Wyse states that the methods of collecting data in a qualitative research are constructed by using semi-structured or unstructured techniques. The methods for collecting data in a qualitative survey include interviews and group discussions.

Conducting a qualitative research can be effective in finding out the important factors behind the issue at hand. After the issues have been identified, a quantitative research on a larger scale can be conducted. (Solomon, Marshall & Stuart 2009, 123)

The purpose of a quantitative research is to produce numerical data to be used a statistics. According to Wyse quantitative research is used to quantify variables such as attitudes, behaviors, and opinions. Quantitative research provides measurable data that can be formulated into facts, which help to uncover research patterns. The methods for collecting data in a quantitative survey are more structured than the ones used in qualitative research. Different kind of surveys and interviews are commonly used.

This research is a qualitative research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAME OF REFERENCE

2.1 Human Resource Management in General

Human resource management plays a major role in a modern company and business environment. HRM is always present whenever people are involved. This means that HRM touches almost all areas and every people in the workplace.

Human Resource Management is one of the key success factors when operating a business. When conducted correctly HRM can provide highly motivated workforce with a high level of commitment and loyalty. HRM is a part of managing as a process. According to Dessler (2011), this process is constructed by five different functions: controlling, leading, organizing, planning and staffing. The purpose of this research is to analyze the recruiting process, so the focus will be on the last of the aforementioned five; staffing.

Staffing is focused on managing the company's employees. In the beginning of recruiting it means determining what types of employees are valuable and needed. Recruiting, selecting, training and developing employees are all part of staffing. (Dessler, G. 2011, 30.)

2.2 Staffing

Recruitment is the process of finding and hiring the people who are best qualified for a job opening. Recruitment should be executed as quickly and as cost effectively as possible. The recruitment process includes such things as; job analysis, employee attraction towards the job, screening applicants, selecting the best applicants and finally hiring and integrating the new employee to the company. (www.businessdictionary.com)

Recruitment is one of the most important processes in a company's operations. Hiring motivated, skilled and the most fitting people for the right jobs can make a huge difference in the results that the organization achieves. Good or bad recruitment can define if the company will succeed or fail. Wrong recruitment decisions along with modern society's laws which make it harder for employers to fire unsuitable people makes it possible for a company to be stuck with undesired, unmotivated workforce for a long time. This is why finding and keeping enthusiastic labor force is vital.

2.2.1 Job analysis

Every organization is constructed so that it consists of jobs and tasks that have to be staffed by someone. The process of determining the job duties and defining the characteristics of people who are regarded best for these posts is called job analysis. Conducting a job analysis produces information about how to write job descriptions which is a list of what the job includes. Job analysis also points out what kind of people to hire for the job at hand. These qualities are called job specifications. (Dessler, G. 2011, 142.)

Job analysis information can be collected in several different ways. Interviews and questionnaires are a typical way but other ones exist as well. Job analysis information can be collected using these methods by themselves or even combining multiple methods to ensure a sufficient amount of data collection. When the type and specifics of the desired data has been established it is time to decide what methods to use in the collection phase.

2.2.1.1 The Interview

Job analysis interviews can be structured, checklist type of interviews with hundreds of questions and items to check off or they can be completely unstructured. These interviews can be held individually with each employee, in a group with employees who have the same job or even with one or more of the supervisors who are familiar with the job. Group interviews are useful and less time consuming when a large number perform similar work. (Dessler, G. 2011, 145-146.)

Using an interview to gather job analysis has its pros and cons. The fact that it is a very popular method tells us of its usefulness. It is not very time consuming and it has the possibility to reveal information that is hard to reveal on a written form. A skilled interviewer can find out specifics or job duties that are less common and might not get mentioned on a written form. It is also a good possibility for the interviewer to further explain the purpose of the data collection for job analysis. From the employee’s point of view it gives an opportunity to express concern or frustration that might otherwise go unnoticed by the management. The main problem concerning interviews is the distortion of information. This can be due to misunderstanding or even deliberate falsification. Employees tend to think that a job analysis interview is some kind of tool to measure efficiency or to evaluate employee's performances in another way. Because of that some employees might exaggerate certain responsibilities. Another reason for falsifying information can be the hope for a rise in salary. (Dessler, G. 2011, 146.)

2.2.1.2 Questionnaires

Using questionnaires to have the employees describe their job-related duties and responsibilities is also a highly used way of collecting job analysis data. Much like in an interview the level of structure has to be established first. After that the questions must be chosen according to what it is the questionnaire is supposed to reveal. Some questionnaires are checklists with high level of structure. Hundreds of questions about specifics duties and tasks are listed and the employee then answers if they perform these tasks. Usually also the time spent on each task is asked. On the other hand the questionnaire can be completely open-ended with just one question, for example "describe your major job duties." In practice the most efficient questionnaires are often somewhere between these two examples where the questionnaire includes structured questions along with a number of open-ended questions. Questionnaires have their strengths and weaknesses no matter the level of structure applied. Questionnaires are relatively quick and efficient compared to interviews when there are tens or even hundreds of employees involved. Developing the questionnaire however, can be tricky. Making sure the questions reveal the right information, and that the workers understand the questions can be very time consuming along with testing the questionnaire. Conscious or unconscious distortion of answers is also an issue as it was with interviews. (Dessler, G. 2011, 149.)

2.2.1.3 Observation

Using direct observation can be very useful or not very useful at all. Depending on the job it can give clear picture what it entails. Jobs such as working on the assembly line or manual labor can, in general, reveal information through observation. Jobs that require a lot of mental activity reveal very little so observation is not the best tool for collecting information about it. Workers can also alternate their ways of working because they know that someone is watching them, so the results might be distorted. Some managers use direct observation alongside interviewing to reveal information. One way of doing this is to first observe the worker for a full work cycle. Depending of the job this can vary from just a few seconds to days. After observing and taking notes the manager asks the worker to clarify job activities that he or she didn't understand during the cycle. Interviewing and observing simultaneously, asking questions while the worker performs on the job, is another approach. (Dessler, G. 2011, 149.)

2.2.1.4 Participant Diary/Logs

Diaries or logs are another way of collecting information about work activities. Whenever employees perform work activities they record it in the log along with the time and the duration of the task. Combined with relevant interviews between a supervisor and a worker, logs can give a highly detailed picture of the job. Like discussed earlier with other methods, exaggeration can be an issue here, but the chronological nature of the log helps to battle this particular problem. Modern diaries and logs can be highly technological. For example dictating machines or pagers can be used to alert the worker at random times during the day to dictate what they are doing at that moment. These kind of advancements help to avoid one traditional problem with logs: relying on workers to remember what they did at certain times during which hour when they fill out their log at the end of the day. (Dessler, G. 2011, 152.)

Job analysis is a great support tool when conducting a recruitment and employee selection process. It provides information about the human characteristics that are needed for the job and also what tasks and duties the job entails. When this information is applied in job descriptions and specifications the manager gets an edge when deciding what sort of people to recruit and hire. (Dessler, G. 2011, 143.)

Putting together a job analysis should always be done co-operatively by the HR specialist, the worker, and the supervisor of that worker. Information collected from the worker and the supervisor, along with the observations of the HR specialist can eventually be compiled into a list by the HR specialist. After a list is compiled the supervisor and the worker will go through it to verify its accuracy concerning required human traits and job duties. (Dessler, G. 2011, 145.)

Job analysis can be a very time consuming task when conducted properly. Compiling information from the workers and supervisors about the job, and what are the requirements for it, is a lot of work. Usually it is the human resource specialist's task to complete the job analysis with the help from people in other positions. Conducting a thorough job analysis is truly a team effort.

2.2.2 Role analysis

According to Armstrong (2006), the term role analysis and role profile are being used more and more instead of job analysis and job description. Even though role analysis uses the same techniques as job analysis and provides information along the same lines, the term role analysis is gaining popularity.

Role analysis means to find out the expectations of achievement of a worker and the skills and competencies needed in order to meet these expectations. (Armstrong, M. 2006, 187)

Role profile is the result of a role analysis. It defines what kind of results the role holders are expected to deliver in certain key areas. Role profile also lists what kind of knowledge and skills are required of the role holder to perform effectively in the appointed role. Role profiles can be made individual for each case or more general for a similar kind of position. (Armstrong, M. 2006, 188)

Armstrong (2006) states that the reason why role analysis is gaining popularity as a term over job analysis is that it is more flexible in terms of what is expected of an employee. Job analysis provides a job description, which lists rather specifically the different tasks an employee is to do. It gives employees a chance to say that some task doesn't belong to them because it is not mentioned in the job description. Role profiles' point of view is more on the results, performance and skill requirements. The most important thing is what the role holder is expected to achieve result wise in the main parts of the job.

2.2.3 Personnel planning and forecasting

According to Dessler (2011), recruitment process in the ideal situation starts with personnel planning. It is the process of deciding what positions will be filled and also how to fill them. This means all future positions from the very top of the company's management to the maintenance man at the office. Armstrong (2006), states that personnel planning needs to take into consideration the qualitative side, and the quantitative side. In other words, what kind of people is needed and how many people are needed.

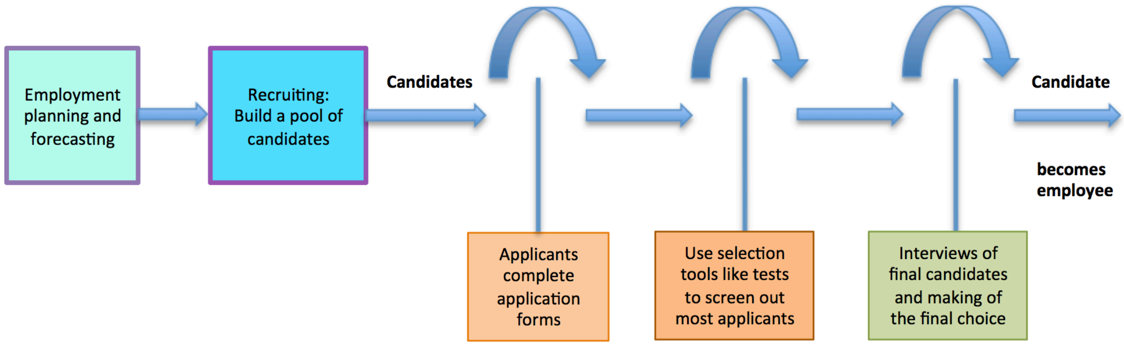

Figure 1. Recruitment and selection process steps. (Dessler, Gary. 2011. Human resource management. Page 178)

Recruiting is a project in itself. The project manager in this case is the manager in charge of recruiting. One of the key things in any project is to establish, from the beginning, who does what and what are the areas of responsibility of the people involved in the process. According to Markkanen (2002, 9.), communication inside the team and keeping everybody up to speed is important in order to keep up with the plan. Markkanen stresses the importance of good planning. According to him the plan should always be meticulously prepared and documented and if there are changes to be made, everyone should be notified of them.

Every plan includes some degree of forecasting, and personnel planning, is no exception. In personnel planning, forecasting can be divided into three different things: *personnel needs*, the *supply of inside candidates* and the *supply of outside candidates*. (Dessler, G. 2011, 178.)

2.2.2.1 Forecasting personnel needs

Planning the need for personnel as a part of business planning, the first step is to forecast the amount of revenue. After the revenue has been forecasted, the amount of staff required to meet these goals will be calculated. There are many other things for managers to consider. These include financial resources, productivity changes, upgrading or downgrading products and services, and projected turnover. It is possible to project personnel needs with the help of a few simple tools. (Dessler, G. 2011, 179.)

Trend analysis is an easy way to use numerical data from the past and the present to forecast future needs. It is a study of the variations in the employment levels over the last years. For example computing the amount of employees at the end of each year of the last 4 years will reveal an estimated need for the following year. Trend analysis is a good tool for providing the initial estimate for future staffing needs. Employment levels usually depend on multiple things such as productivity and change in sales volume. Trend analysis only illustrates the passing of time. (Dessler, G. 2011, 179.)

Ratio analysis is another simple way of forecasting future needs. It means forecasting, using the historical ratio between two different things. For example the ratio between sales volume and the number of employees needed. If a salesperson traditionally generates 250,000€ in sales and the target is to make 2 million euros. If the salespeople to sales revenue ratio stays the same, the company would require eight salespeople who each produce the required 250,000€ to meet their goal. Similar to trend analysis, ratio analysis assumes that the level of productivity stays the same. The rise or fall of sales productivity would cause a change in the ratio of sales to salespeople. (Dessler, G. 2011, 179-180.)

A scatter plot is a graph that demonstrates how two variables, like work experience and income, are related to each other. If the two are related and the work experience in years is known, then it should be possible to forecast the amount of income. If a person has more experience in work years he is likely to have more income than someone with less experience. (Dessler, G. 2011, 180.)

Subject Number	Experience in Years	Income in Thousands	Subject Number	Experience in Years	Income in Thousands
1	0	20	6	15	50
2	5	30	7	20	60
3	5	40	8	25	50
4	10	30	9	30	70
5	10	50	10	35	60

Figure 2. Scatter plot data table. (AllPsych: Research methods. Chapter 8.6 The Correlation.)

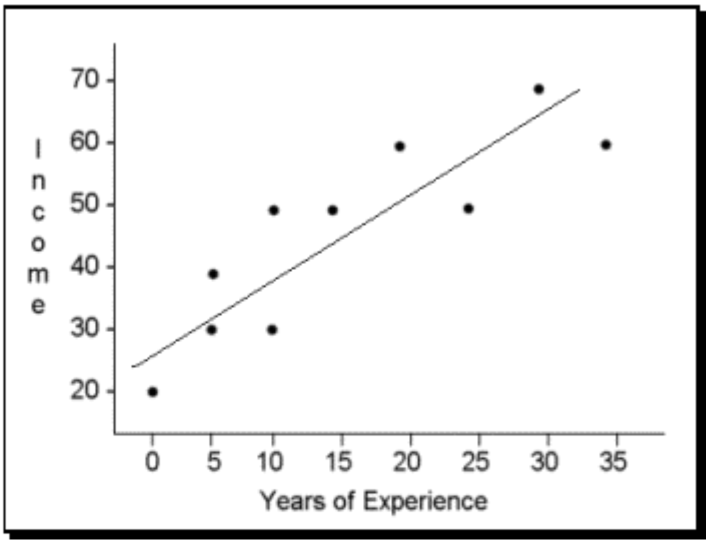

Figure 3. Scatter plot graph (AllPsych: Research methods. Chapter 8.6 The Correlation.)

In the case of MML-Group the variables could be the number of work sites and the number of personnel needed. This way the scatter plot could give an estimate how many new employees are needed to provide sufficient work force in order to expand the business.

The scatter plot also has its own weaknesses. Generally they focus on historical personnel and sales relationships and only work if the firm's activities stay the same or continue along the same lines. They usually support managers for managing ever-growing staffs, even if the company's strategic needs are not along these lines. In the face of change scatter plots tend to institutionalize the existing ways of doing things. (Dessler, G. 2011, 180.)

Using computers to support forecasting personnel needs gives the manager the ability to create more variables into his projections about personnel. New systems focus on the mathematical side of setting goals, for example reducing the inventory on hand. Other possible variables could be for instance, the amount of direct work hours it takes to produce one unit of product and the minimum, maximum and probable sales projections. Based on the input the program then calculates average staff levels that are needed to meet product demands and also separate forecasts for indirect, direct and exempt staff. (Dessler, G. 2011, 181.)

These kinds of programs help the employer to more accurately translate their desired sales and productivity levels into a forecast for the need of personnel. These programs also make it possible to make an estimation of various sales and productivity level presumptions on personnel requirements. Many companies use computerized forecasting systems especially for predicting short-term personnel needs. In retailing for example sales forecasts and estimated store traffic are used as a base for labor scheduling systems. Labor scheduling systems then provide an estimate on the required number of staff. (Dessler, G. 2011, 181.)

Dessler (2011) reminds that using forecasting tools, whichever one of them, one should always use managerial judgment. Historical ratios, trends or relationships very rarely continue forever. That is the reason why the forecast needs to be modified based on subjective factors that the management feels will be important.

2.2.2.2 Forecasting the supply of inside candidates

Once the company's staffing needs are known a half of the staffing equation has been filled. Next step is to estimate the likely supply of candidates for those needs. There are two sources of candidates, the inside supply and the outside supply. Most companies first explore the possibility of inside candidates. (Dessler, G. 2011, 181.)

The main task is to find out which of the current employees might be qualified for the upcoming openings. In order to succeed you have to know the current employee's qualifications and skills sets. Sometimes the decision can be very easy to make and there is a perfect match for the job, but sometimes the decision can be a little less obvious. In such cases managers turn to qualifications inventories to help them reach a decision.

Qualifications inventories contain data on the employee's education, performance records, and promotability. This data will give the manager valuable information if the candidate is available for promotion or transfer. (Dessler, G. 2011, 181.)

In the case of MML-Group a qualification inventory is managed, where different certificates, qualifications and skills are listed. Some types of jobs require for example training and a permit to use certain types of tools or to work in certain kinds of environments. People who possess required qualifications are usually contacted first, but it's also possible to train people in order to get them qualified for these jobs.

Computerized skills inventories are in use in large firms who employ a lot of people. Keeping track of hundreds or thousands of employees manually is impossible, therefore computer software systems are used to store and access this information. Skills inventory systems can be linked with other human resource systems so that when an employee is trained for example, his skills inventory is automatically updated. (Dessler, G. 2011, 182.)

Usually the information from each employee is gathered so that it can be accessed when needed. Useful information such as background, education, skills, and experience are collected to the company intranet. When a manager needs a person to fill a certain position, he can search for the best suitable person from the intranet using key words describing the position's specifications. The computerized skills inventory then lists all of the qualified candidates. The data gathered in the computerized skills inventory typically consists of things like formal education, work experience codes, the person's industry experience, product knowledge, and the employee's knowledge of the product lines or services of the employer. (Dessler, G. 2011, 182.)

2.2.2.3 Forecasting the supply of outside candidates

If there are not enough inside candidates to fill the projected openings, the company has to turn to outside candidates. There can also be other reasons for recruiting from outside the company. Forecasting outside candidates requires access to certain data. For example unemployment percentage may give some signals how easy it will be to find good candidates. (Dessler, G. 2011, 182-183.)

2.2.4 Employee recruiting

Once the need for personnel has been forecasted and the conclusion has been made that new positions will be open in the near future it is time to start looking for the people to fill those positions. Once the job analysis has been conducted and the company has established the specifics of the job it's time to start looking for the right people. Forecasting of internal and outside supply of candidates helps to identify whether to focus on the inside supply or to start recruiting from outside the company.

Once the company has authorized a position to be filled it is time to start building an applicant pool through recruiting. Employee recruiting means finding and attracting suitable applicants for the open position. (Dessler, G. 2011, 183.)

The importance of effective recruiting is hard to overemphasize. Depending on the number of applicants the choice of hiring employees varies. If there is only one applicant for an open position there is little choice but to hire them. But if 30 people apply for the same position, tests and interviews can help the company to screen out the applicants that are not suited for the job. A large number of applicants doesn't mean that even one of them will be a good candidate. Finding qualified applicants is not certain when recruiting for an open position. (Dessler, G. 2011, 183.)

Recruiting is not just posting open job ads in the internet or a local newspaper. It is a much more complex process. There are several things that make it as complicated as it is. Some methods of recruiting are more efficient than others. Depending on the type of job or position which the company is recruiting for. The success of recruiting can also depend largely on matters that are non-related to recruiting. For example, paying 10% more than most of the similar firms in the local area can help the company to build a bigger pool of applicants faster. (Dessler, G. 2011, 183-184.)

2.2.4.1 Organizing the recruitment process

Depending on the company's size it is possible to centralize the recruitment efforts. If a company has a lot of different sectors it is reasonable to evaluate if the recruiting success would increase by centralizing the efforts. By centralizing recruitment the company finds it easier to implement the strategic priorities of the company to every sector. It is easier to strengthen the employment image. Recruiting centrally also removes the possibility of duplication. Centralized recruiting makes it easier for the company to ensure that the most qualified recruitment experts are the ones who are in control of the process and that all legal obligations of recruitment are fulfilled. The biggest individual reason perhaps these days is the popularity of recruiting over the internet. It is easier for the company to centralize recruiting when all the information can be accessed over the internet all across the globe. The need for local recruitment offices is dwindling. (Dessler, G. 2011, 184.)

The role of the supervisor in recruiting is very important. The human resource manager in charge of the recruiting for the open job is rarely familiar with the job itself. Somebody has to explain to the HR manager what the job really is about and what it entails. What are the things that are most important to look for when recruiting or which are the things to watch out for. These are the things the supervisor of the position plays a big part in. This is when the knowledge of a quality job analysis will prove to be very useful. If the job analysis is executed correctly the HR manager will gain a lot of valuable information from it. Combined with the information from the job analysis and the information acquired from the supervisor the recruiter is equipped to answer possible questions about the position, such as the supervisor's leadership style and work group dynamics. (Dessler, G. 2011, 184.)

2.2.4.2 The recruiting yield pyramid

Some companies choose to use a recruiting yield pyramid to calculate how many applicants they must have to hire as many new employees as required. In Figure 4 company knows it needs 50 new employees next year. From previous experience they also know the following:

- The ratio of offers made to actual new hires is 2 to 1
- The ratio of people interviewed to offers made is 3 to 2
- The ratio of applicants invited for an interview to candidates interviewed is around 4 to 3
- The company knows that of six leads generated in all of recruiting only one candidate usually gets invited for an interview – a 6-to-1 ratio.

Calculations based on these ratios indicate that the company has to generate 1200 leads to be able to get 200 qualified candidates invited for an interview. About 150 of those candidates will then be interviewed and around 100 of those candidates will get job offers. (Dessler, G. 2011, 184-185.)

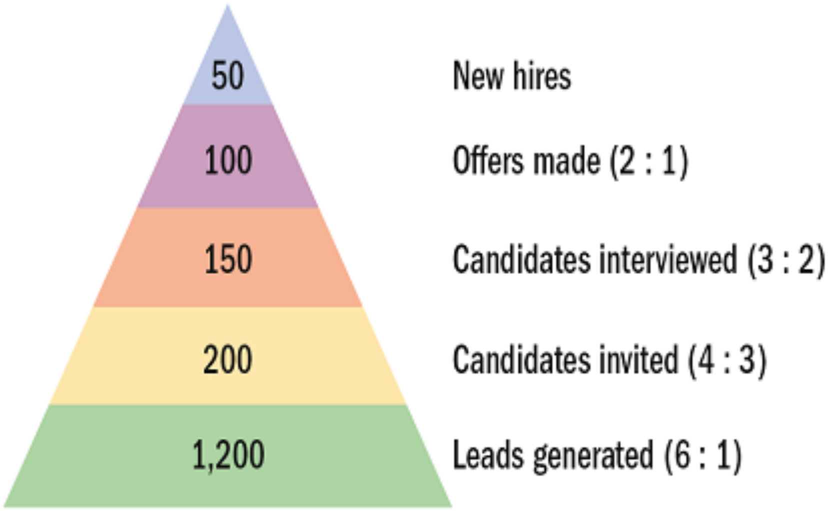

Figure 4. The recruiting yield pyramid. (Assignment point: Report on performance appraisal system of RABAB FASHION INDUSTRIES LTD.)

2.2.4.3 Internal source of candidates

Recruiting is not only hiring new people to the company's service. The word "recruiting" is often associated with posting advertisements or open job announcements in the local newspaper. In a lot of cases hiring from inside the company is the best possible solution. (Dessler, G. 2011, 185.)

According to Armstrong (2006, 415.), internal candidates should always be looked at first. He also states that some companies require that the internal candidates are treated exactly the same as the outside candidates. Markkanen (2002, 17.) points out that internal hiring does not really remove the need for workforce but it's a way to shift the recruiting need on to a position that is more easily replaced.

Using inside candidates to fill positions has multiple advantages. First of all the company is already familiar with the candidate. The style of work and also the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate are well known. Current employees are also more likely to be committed to the company more than a completely new employee. The rise of morale among employees is likely to occur when employees notice it is possible to get promotions as rewards for competence and loyalty. Inside candidates should also require less orientation and training than others. (Dessler, G. 2011, 185.)

Hiring from inside has also its negative sides. According to Dessler (2011, 185.) employees who apply for open jobs and do not get them can become discontented and their morale can drop. Internal recruiting can also be a waste of time. In many occasions the manager already knows the person they want to hire but the company insists that the manager posts the job and interviews all inside candidates. This can be a waste of time for all concerned. Another potential drawback can be inbreeding. People from inside the company can have a tendency to keep the status quo and when a new direction is needed it is likely that they are unwilling to make the necessary change. Markkanen (2002, 17.) states that it is also possible for other workers to feel unsatisfied if one person among them gets promoted.

Internal hiring relies a lot on job posting and the skill inventories of the company. Job posting is when the job is made public for employees usually by posting it on bulletin boards or the company intranet. These postings list the job's requirements and other information about it such as pay rate, work schedule and the supervisor. Company databases and skill banks also play a role in finding internal candidates. The database may reveal person who have the required background or the potential for further training considering the open job. (Dessler, G. 2011, 185.)

Rehiring an employee who left the company is always a possibility. On the positive side, old employees are familiar with how the company operates. On the other hand if the employee in question was let go, their motivation and attitude can be everything other than positive. Hiring employees who left the company can signal the current employees that the best way to move forward in the company is to resign. (Dessler, G. 2011, 185-186.)

Precautions can be taken to reduce the possibility of adverse reactions. After employees have been back in the service of the company for a certain period of time, credit them with the years of service they provided the company before they left. Before hiring it is advisable to inquire them what they did during the layoff and how they would feel about returning to the company. (Dessler, G. 2011, 185-186.)

The importance of hiring from within the company is clear when filling the firm's top positions. Internal filling of these positions requires succession planning – the ongoing process of systematically assessing, identifying and developing leadership inside the organization for better results. According to Dessler around 36% of companies use formal succession planning programs. There are three steps in succession planning: identifying key needs or key positions, creating and valuating candidates, and ultimately selecting those who will fill the opening positions. (Dessler, G. 2011, 186.)

According to company plans the top management will identify what the future key positions need to be. After this has been established the management or the HR manager forms job descriptions and specifications for each position. (Dessler, G. 2011, 186.)

After key positions have been identified the company will start creating candidates for these jobs. In this case "creating" means identifying potential internal or perhaps external candidates for the future positions. The company will then provide a developing environment for these candidates to acquire the necessary skills to perform in these future key position jobs. Internal training, job rotation, cross-functional experiences, and external training are some possible ways to prepare selected candidates for the future. (Dessler, G. 2011, 186.)

The last phase of succession planning is assessing the candidates and selecting those who will eventually fill the key positions. (Dessler, G. 2011, 186.)

2.2.4.4 Outside sources of candidates

Companies can't always get the employees they need from within the company. If a suitable talent can't be found within the company then they must look outside their own personnel to find the best option. Sometimes firms prefer not to hire from within. In these cases the company must use sources available for outside recruiting.

In the case of MML-Group hiring from inside the company is rarely an option. Top management positions and supervisory roles are a different case, but usually there is a need to increase the work force in size due to new projects.

The number one tool for job searching today is the internet. Majority of open positions can be located online and a job seeker only needs a computer and an internet connection to find these jobs. For companies searching for employees, posting online is also an important tool as many companies post open jobs to their own websites. This means that the costs of posting to newspapers or billboards are eliminated. Employment websites or job boards are another recruiting channel for companies. Job boards pool together a lot of open jobs from different companies for the job seeker to browse through. (Dessler, G. 2011, 187.)

Susan M. Heathfield states in her article at www.thebalance.com that social media sites provide a lot of opportunities for companies that are looking to hire new workforce. Heathfield also mentions that there are some negative sides to recruiting online. Candidate screening and background checks present their own challenges and checking employee job references is even more demanding in online social media than when using more traditional ways of recruiting.

In the same article Heathfield interviews Rob Pickell who states that 76% of firms confirmed that they either use, or are planning to use social media sites as a part of recruiting. Networking is one of the most efficient ways of finding jobs and LinkedIn is an online equivalent to person-to-person networking.

According to Dessler (2011, 188.), there is a lot of positive sides to recruiting online. It is highly cost-effective compared to other methods, it is not especially time-consuming, and it generates more leads faster than other methods. Armstrong (2006, 421.) points out that the amount of information included in a job posting is virtually unlimited when posting online. He also mentions the possibility for using online screening and testing. Initial screening of applicants is often necessary, as overload of CV's and résumés sent online can be overwhelming. Dessler mentions overload as being one of the biggest problems when recruiting online.

Recruiting via the internet is rapidly increasing and replacing many of the traditional ways of recruiting. Regardless of the popularity of internet recruiting advertising in print media is still very popular. Almost every newspaper or a professional magazine will have print ads on their pages. To successfully use these printed ads, the employer must carefully consider two issues: the advertising medium and the construction of the advertisement. (Dessler, G. 2011, 191.)

Choosing the right medium is vital when recruiting. Advertising in the local newspaper for clerical employees or blue-collar help is often a good way to reach enough qualified candidates. If the position the employer is hiring for is a specialist position it is best to advertise in big nationwide newspaper and professional magazines. (Dessler, G. 2011, 191.)

AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) is a guide used by experienced advertisers to create appealing ads. The first key point to focus on is to attract attention to the ad, otherwise readers will just ignore it. Attracting attention can be acquired with a good design or an appealing phrase like "Are you our next key player?" Developing interest in the job comes next. Interest can be created by forming lines such as "are you looking to make an impact" or other features of the job such as the location of the workplace. Desire can be created by spotlighting some aspects of the job, such as the possibility to travel, or mentioning the challenges the job provides. Finally the ad should end with a statement that makes the candidate want to take action and apply for the position. For example phrases like "call today" are a simple way to steer the candidate towards contacting the company. (Dessler, G. 2011, 191-192.)

Many companies recruit from universities and vocational schools. Most of university recruiting happens in the form of offering internships. In the case of MML-Group recruiting from universities and universities of applied sciences is a good source to recruit office workers such as sales assistants, HR assistants and IT professionals.

Recruiting from vocational schools provides another source of workers. MML-Group recruits professionals for use on the construction sites. Construction workers, carpenters, and electric engineers are an example of professionals that are useful to MML-Group.

2.2.5 Employee testing & selection

Once the applicants have submitted their résumés and they have been reviewed, the next step is to choose the best candidates for the job. Usually this means eliminating candidates from the applicant pool by using different screening tools, and reference checks. After only a certain number of applicants remain, the person in charge can interview the candidates and decide whom to hire.

One of the most important operations inside a company is the hiring of new people. There are a few reasons why selecting the right candidate is important, the most important being performance and costs. (Dessler, G. 2011, 218.)

Manager's performance is always determined by the performance of their subordinates. Employees with the right skill set perform better at their job and that reflects positively to the performance of the manager and the company as a whole. Employees who lack essential skills won't perform as well, reflecting negatively on the performance of the manager and the firm. It is important to screen out the undesirables while they are not yet working for the company. (Dessler, G. 2011, 218.)

Careful selection is important because recruiting and hiring people is costly for the company. Hiring and then training even a clerk can cost up to thousands of euros only in fees and supervisory time. The total cost of hiring a manager can be up to ten times as high once the search fees, reference checks, interview time, and travel and moving expenses are considered. (Dessler, G. 2011, 218.)

2.2.5.1 Candidate testing

Using a test to, basically, sample a person's behavior requires a few things from the test. The test has to be both reliable and valid. If a test is not both reliable and valid the data collected from it is useless. (Dessler, G. 2011, 218.)

Reliability refers to the test's consistency and it is the first requirement of the test. A test is reliable when the test results are consistent when a person takes the test more than once. The results should also be consistent if a person takes two alternate forms of the same test. If a person scores 50/100 on a test on Tuesday and 90/100 on Wednesday the person screening applicants probably won't put much value on the test. (Dessler, G. 2011, 218.)

Reliability or consistency can be estimated in several different ways. A retest estimate means when a group of people take the test at two different points in time and the results from test one are compared with the results from test two. An equivalent form estimate is when a test is administered and after that another test, which experts believe to be equivalent with the first test. (Dessler, G. 2011, 218-219.)

Another reliability measurement is the test's internal consistency. *For example a psychologist includes 10 items on a test of vocational interests, believing that they all measure, in various ways, the test taker's interest in working outdoors.* (Dessler, G. 2011, 219.) After the test has been administered someone will analyze the degree to which response to these items vary together. This provides a measure of internal reliability of the test. This is called an internal comparison estimate. Some questionnaires include apparently repetitive questions and internal consistency is one of the reasons why. (Dessler, G. 2011, 219.)

There are many things that can cause a test to be unreliable. For example the emphasis put on questions between the two tests. Test one may focus more on questions 1 to 5 and the second test may focus more on questions 6-10. The changes in test conditions such as temperature and noise levels in the room where the test is being taken play a part in the reliability of the test. (Dessler, G. 2011, 219.)

Reliability only tells that the test is consistent in testing something. It does not prove that the test is measuring accurately the thing that it is supposed to be measuring. That is why validity is important. A mismanufactured 20cm ruler will tell the user that something is 20cm long when in reality it could be 21cm. A valid ruler will measure correctly the actual thing that is supposed to be measured. (Dessler, G. 2011, 219.)

Test is a sample of a person's behavior, like mentioned before. Some tests more clearly represent the behavior being sampled than others. For example a typing test is clearly testing for on-the-job skills and behavior. In other cases some tests, like the Rorschach test is based on the psychologist's conclusions. In tests like these it is more difficult to prove that they are actually measuring what they are supposed to be measure. This means that the validity is not guaranteed. (Dessler, G. 2011, 219-220.)

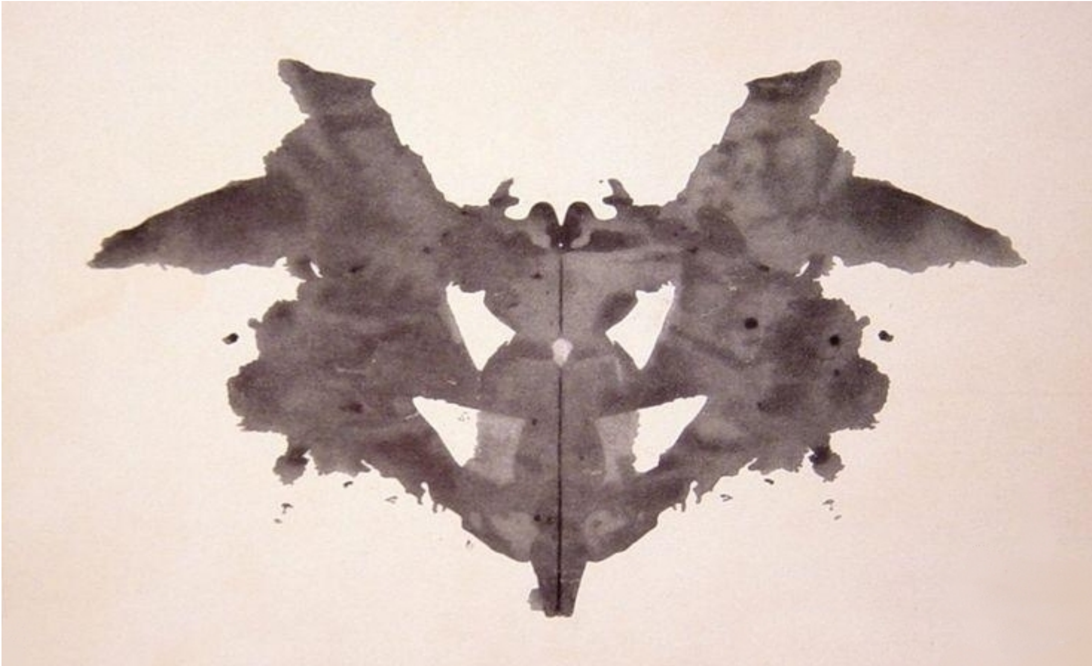

Figure 5. Rorschach test example image. (Wikipedia: Rorschach test.)

2.2.6 Interviewing candidates

There are several types of interviews used in the workplace. Appraisal interview is a discussion between a supervisor and the employee, following a performance appraisal. In this discussion the supervisor and the employee go through the employee's ratings and talk about possible remedial actions. Exit interview is often conducted when a person leaves the company. It is usually done to find out what is wrong and what is right about the firm. Possibly the most important interview of all is the Selection interview. Selection interviews can be classified according to:

1. How much structure they have
2. The content and the types of questions they have
3. How they are administered by the firm (Dessler, G. 2011, 256.)

The level of structure varies in selection interviews. In unstructured interviews, no specific format is being followed. Some questions might be thought of in advance, but generally the interview is more like a conversation with no specific right or wrong answers. (Dessler, G. 2011, 256.)

Structured interviews are almost the exact opposite of unstructured interviews. All of the questions have been listed ahead of time and possibly even some kind of scoring system has been established to match the answers of the candidate. Usually the questions are job-oriented ones with predetermined answers. (Dessler, G. 2011, 256.)

There are different levels of structure in interviews. Some managers want to have a list of questions available where they pick the ones they want to ask the candidate. Some managers want to have a direct guideline of the whole interview so they can follow it to avoid accidentally skipping questions. There are also managers who just want to have a conversation with the applicant without any predetermined questions.

Structured interviews are undoubtedly superior to unstructured ones. Structured interviews have a tendency to be more reliable and valid because all the candidates face the same questions. A clear structure in the interview can also help a less talented or less experienced interviewer to conduct better interviews. Standardized interview also enhances job relatedness, increases consistency across candidates, and reduces subjectivity and potential bias in the process. (Dessler, G. 2011, 256.)

2.2.6.1 Interview content

Interviews can be classified based on the types of questions asked or “content”. A lot of interviewers like to ask relatively unrevealing questions like “What are your weaknesses?” and “Where do you see yourself in 10 years?” Usually these types of questions don’t tell much about how the person will actually perform on the job. At work, situational, behavioral, and job-related questions are most important. (Dessler, G. 2011, 258-259.)

In a situational interview the candidate is asked what their behavior or actions would be in a certain situation. For example a supervisory candidate might need to explain what their plan of action would be if a subordinate misses an important deadline three times in a row. (Dessler, G. 2011, 259.)

Situational interviews ask candidates how they would react to a hypothetical situation, whereas behavioral interview questions ask candidates how they reacted to actual situations that happened in the past. Situational and behavioral interviews can be tough on applicants as it is hard to fool the interviewer when they keep asking you to explain your former actions or plan your future actions. (Dessler, G. 2011, 259.)

Job-related interview does not revolve around questions about actual situations or hypothetical scenarios. In a job-related interview the interviewer asks candidates about relevant past experiences. To find out the applicant's ability to handle a certain aspect of the job the interviewer asks questions that might reveal this, such as "What was your favorite course in business school?" (Dessler, G. 2011, 259.)

In addition to the before mentioned types of interviews, more lesser-used forms of interviews, exist. A stress interview is a type of interview where the interviewer aims to make the applicant uncomfortable by occasionally asking them rude questions. The purpose of this kind of interview is to spot the potentially sensitive applicants or those with a high tolerance of stress. The manager might focus on the applicant's background for example a job the applicant left under questionable circumstances. Then the aim is to start asking questions about that specific situation and try to make the applicant lose their composure. Based on the applicant's reaction the manager can then make conclusions about their stress management and suitability for the job. Conducting a stress interview is also demanding for the interviewer. This is why a person who is skilled in conducting these kinds of interviews and who can keep the situation under control is required. (Dessler, G. 2011, 259-260.)

Puzzle questions are also popular among recruiters. Recruiters like to use them to find out how applicants think under pressure. For example mathematical puzzles like: "Tim goes to the supermarket and buys 8 cans of pineapple, but he can only carry three at a time, how many trips to the supermarket Tim has to make?" (Dessler, G. 2011, 260.)

2.2.6.2 Administering the interview

There are several ways to administer an interview: one-on-one or a panel of interviewers; sequentially or all at once and computerized or personally.

Selection interviews are usually one-on-one and sequential or in other words serial. In a one-on-one interview, two people meet and one is the interviewer asking questions from the other one. These interviews tend to be sequential where several people interview the candidate and form their own opinion. The interview can be unstructured when the questions are not determined beforehand and the interview is more of a free flowing conversation. If the interview is structured, the interviewer seeks oral responses to questions portrayed on an evaluation form. Each interviewer does this and then the evaluation forms are sent to the hiring manager who makes the decision on who to hire. (Dessler, G. 2011, 260.)

A panel interview is an interview conducted by a team of interviewers. Also known as the board interview it usually consists of a handful of interviewers who together interview each candidate and then pool their opinions into a final score. This format gives the interviewers a better chance of asking follow-up questions in a similar way that reporters do at press conferences. Compared to a normal one-on-one interview, these follow-up questions may give more meaningful answers and produce more information for the interviewers. On the other hand some candidates find these panel interviews to be more stressful, and that can affect their answers.

Depending a lot on the execution of a panel interview is the reliability of it. For example a structured panel interview is considered more reliable and valid compared to unstructured ones. The use of scoring sheets with sample answers guiding the scoring, further enhance the results of the interview. Training the panel of interviewers may also hold significant meaning in the end results. (Dessler, G. 2011, 260.)

Some employers choose to do entire interviews by telephone. Phone interview, as a tool, can be more accurate in measuring a candidate's intelligence, conscientiousness and interpersonal skills. In a phone interview neither party has to worry about appearances so the focus is solely on the questions and responses. The aspect of surprise of a phone call is also a possible factor. Maybe the candidate responses more sincerely and spontaneously if the phone call is not scheduled. Interviewers tend to favor applicants more when interviewed over the phone, especially if the candidate is less physically attractive. However face-to-face interview compared to a videoconference held no significant difference to the interviewers.

The use of video interviews via Skype or similar products has become popular among companies. Using video interviews is beneficial to both the company and the candidate. Eliminating travel expenses for the first round of interviews can attract more applicants from a wider area. Video interviews have not, however, entirely replaced the traditional face-to-face interview.

Computerized interviews are used by some companies as a part of their interview process. In a computerized selection interview, the candidate responds to questions via computer. The questions are usually in regard to the candidate's background, education, experience, skills and attitudes relating to the job in question. Typical computerized interviews are composed of multiple choice questions. (Dessler, G. 2011, 262.)

2.2.6.3 Typical interview errors and how to avoid them

One of the reasons why interviews are not as useful as they could be is that the managers make errors during the process. Errors are of human nature but the type of errors typically concerning interviews are predictable and potentially avoidable through careful preparation and training.

Interviewers have a tendency to jump to conclusions or to make snap judgments about interviewee's. During the first minutes of the interview many interviewers already form an opinion about the candidate or even before the interview based on test scores and résumé data. First impressions are particularly damaging when the information from the past is negative. Interviewers who receive unfavorable reference letters about candidates tend to hold the candidate responsible for prior failures and less credit for possible past successes. In many cases this information weighs more in the decision making than the actual interview performance. (Dessler, G. 2011, 264.)

In addition to before-mentioned, interviewers are less influenced by favorable than unfavorable information regarding the candidate. The interviewers opinions and impressions are also more likely to turn from favorable to unfavorable than the other way round. (Dessler, G. 2011, 264.)

Interviewers who have insufficient or inaccurate information about the job requirements make their decisions based on incorrect stereotypes or impressions of what a good candidate is. The desired traits should be determined and passed on to the interviewer before the interview so the decisions are made based on the right facts. More job knowledge equals better interviews. (Dessler, G. 2011, 264.)

The order in which the applicants are interviewed can also make a huge difference in the evaluation of candidates. If the interviewer first meets with several poor or unqualified applicants, a candidate who seemed “average” can get a lot more favorable evaluation than under different circumstances. The poor candidates made the average applicant look better or more qualified than what he actually is. If there is a pressure to hire people this problem only increases. If there is a recruiting quota and the interviewer is behind he tends to evaluate candidates more favorably. (Dessler, G. 2011, 264.)

Nonverbal behavior is important in a job interview. The applicant’s posture, handshake, smiling, and making eye contact can make all the difference. In a study where the applicants’ verbal content was exactly identical but nonverbal behavior varied the results were clear. Human resource specialists watched the interview and those applicants who exhibited high energy level and high eye contact were the ones who would have been called for a follow-up interview. (Dessler, G. 2011, 265.)

Clever candidates can take advantage during the interview using impression management. Agreeing with the interviewer and appearing to share the same beliefs is a way to get the interviewer think more highly of a candidate. Using ingratiation can be used to compensate the lack of job skills or experience.

The physical attributes of a candidate can also play a role in distorting the view and final decision making of the interviewer. Attributes such as gender, race, attractiveness or disabilities are among the most important ones to affect the candidate’s success during their career. People tend to ascribe more successful life outcomes and favorable traits to attractive people. According to a study where the subjects had to evaluate candidates based on photographs, they perceived men to be more suitable for hire and promotion over equally qualified women. More attractive candidates were preferred over less attractive ones. Women who expressed the same desire to move forward in their careers, were still offered fewer career opportunities and less money than men of same qualifications. (Dessler, G. 2011, 265-266.)

Race can also play a role, depending how the interview is conducted. In one study the white members of a racially balanced interview panel rated white candidates higher, while the black interviewers rated black candidates higher. A structured interview produced less of a difference between white candidates and candidates who were minorities, than unstructured interviews. (Dessler, G. 2011, 266.)

In general, the candidate's good performance in a structured interview had little positive effect to the outcome if they had a disability or other attributes such as child-care demands or an illness. Because the physical attributes of a candidate weigh so much in the decision making process, some suggestions have been made that interviews should be held so that the candidate and the interviewer can't see each other. This would decrease the discrimination of minorities and less attractive people. (Dessler, G. 2011, 266.)

The interviewer's behavior also has an affect on the interviewee's performance and final rating. If the interviewer has a positive image of the interviewee, they might lead the candidate to give the correct answer. For example the interviewer might phrase the question as follows: "This job requires good multitasking skills. You can multitask, can't you?" Some interviewers look for inconsistencies in the candidate's answers and try to trap them for being untruthful. Looking for hidden meanings and over analyzing answers is also a possible interviewing error. There are also interviewers who are just not suitable to be conducting interviews. They ask the wrong questions and focus on the wrong things. There are also those who have a talent on picking out the best candidates. (Dessler, G. 2011, 267.)

The following list summarizes potential, but avoidable interviewing errors:

- First impressions and snap judgments
- Poor clarification of what the job includes and job requirements
- Wrong order of candidates and pressure to hire
- Nonverbal behavior
- Impression management
- The effects of candidate's personal characteristics
- The interviewer's inadvertent behaviors (Dessler, G. 2011, 267.)

Avoiding interview errors is not such a complicated matter. The best and easiest way to avoid making errors, is to keep in mind what the most common errors are and to simply avoid them. Another way is to use structured interviews. Not such a simple task but a very effective one. It is a way to keep the interview, and the questions, job-relevant. (Dessler, G. 2011, 267.)

3 RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

3.1 Number of respondents

The questionnaire was sent to every back office worker in the company. 8 people in total responded to the survey with varying levels of information on the topic at hand. Out of these 8 people only 3 HR related on a scale that their answers would give a meaningful input to this research.

3.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was constructed of questions concerning the current recruitment practicalities and how the employees viewed them. The goal was to find out which parts of the current system were working properly and where the possible points of improvement were.

3.2.1 Background information of respondents

Like mentioned earlier the number of respondents for this questionnaire was a total of 8 people. However, the size of the company and the amount of people involved in recruitment explains the numbers. The three respondents mentioned earlier are people who are very familiar with how the company works in every level. There is experience from the worksites and fieldwork in addition with executive management.

First of the three respondents is the human resource coordinator. He has been working in the company for one and a half years and has experience from this particular field of business from earlier employers. His earlier experience from the worksites and then from the back office as a human resource coordinator means that he can share information that is valuable to this research.

Second respondent is the CEO of the company. He has taken on the role of CEO while this research has been going on. He has been working in the company for eight years and has been part of the management the whole time. He has a very good understanding of the company structure and is constantly involved in executive decision making, also considering HRM and recruitment.

The third respondent stepped down from the position of CEO just recently. He has been with the company seven years and most of that time he has been holding the position of CEO. He is a founding member of the company and has experience of the industry spanning over a decade. His input to this research was invaluable.

3.2.2 Roles and actions during the recruitment process

The two respondents with the status of CEO both described their roles to be mostly supervisory during the recruitment process. The CEO recognized that his responsibilities and actions during the course of the process were mainly to manage and organize each step of the process. The former CEO described his actions to be “staying vigilant” and “getting constant information from the field”.

The HR coordinator, stated that he was responsible for much of the concrete actions and execution of the different phases of the recruitment process. He divided his actions during the recruitment process into four different phases.

3.2.3 Work hours spent and electronic recruitment tools

All of the people involved in the recruitment of new employees have at their use certain electronic forms and databases to make the process more efficient. The HR coordinator mentions a template that can be used when posting job ads to the employment agency’s website and also a form that can be used in the interview phase.

The CEO and former CEO both mention the recruitment database, JobBoard. Applicants and their information can be added into the database and it is possible to, for example, send interview invitations directly through the database.

The question, “How many work hours do you personally put into the recruitment of each new employee?” yielded surprising results. Answers to this question varied significantly between the respondents. The HR coordinator estimated that he spends two working hours per each new employee. The two CEO’s estimations, however, were separated by a margin of 7,5 hours. Former CEO estimated to use 30 minutes per employee while the CEO states that each new employee takes up to eight hours of his time.

3.2.4 Different phases of the recruitment process

The respondents were asked how many different phases there are in the recruitment process and also to name them. All three of the respondents were along the same lines as to how many phases there are, with answers varying from four to six.

The HR coordinator identified four different phases in the process; creating the job ad, sorting through applications, interviewing, and hiring. The CEO states that the phases are; posting the job ad, sorting through applications, interviewing and testing, and finally hiring. The last respondent, former CEO lists the phases as follows; the need for a new employee, posting the job ad, filtering candidates, interviewing, applicant reserve, and hiring.

When asked if the respondents thought the division of the process is working, both the CEO and former CEO responded yes. The HR coordinator noted a problem saying that in a fast paced recruitment, the automatic interview invitations are not working. This is perhaps not due to the unsuccessful division of phases but merely an issue of timetables and deadlines.

All respondents agreed, that the right person is managing each phase of the process and that everybody knows their own role.

3.2.5 Recruitment channels and reaching the right applicants

All three respondents agreed that the right recruitment channels are being used and that these channels make it possible to reach the most suitable applicants. All three respondents were asked to name the main recruitment channels in use. All three respondents mentioned employment agency and co-operating with universities and vocational schools. The former CEO and the CEO also identified social media as a functioning channel of recruitment, whereas the HR coordinator didn’t mention social media but the company’s own website instead.

Everyone also agreed that the job advertisements are executed properly, but the former CEO mentioned that the job requirements, and what is expected of the applicants is not stated clearly enough. The HR coordinator also agreed with the former CEO in this matter. The HR coordinator also believed that there is not enough additional information available about the company or the open job positions, for example on the company website.

3.2.6 Interviewing candidates

The respondents were asked if they believe the best candidates have been interviewed and two out of three believed this was not the case. The CEO was the only one who believed that the most suitable and most competent applicants were actually being interviewed.

When asked about the image that the interview portrays of the company the CEO and the HR coordinator were positive that the image portrayed is professional. The former CEO on the other hand had the opinion that the image portrayed is not professional enough.

The former CEO also believed that not enough emphasis has been put into the interviews. The questionnaire shows clearly that interviews are the one part of the process the former CEO clearly has most doubts about. The CEO and the HR coordinator both believed that there was enough emphasis and effort put into the interviews.

3.2.7 Successes and points of improvement

The respondents were asked what they believe is the best executed part of the recruitment process. The HR coordinator’s opinion was that the best part was the possibility of sending automated interview invites through the database, he did not specify why. The former CEO stated that the best part was the coverage of the job ads compared to their cost. The CEO believes the best part of the process is the quality of the interviews and tests. In his opinion they give a good understanding of the candidates and their suitability to the position in question.

In the respondent's minds parts that need the most improvement were interviews, scheduling and employee database. The former CEO was concerned that the interviews do not efficiently enough map the job related know-how or the suitability towards the job. In the CEO's mind the biggest problem is scheduling and finding time to be more involved personally in the interviews. The HR coordinator mentioned the worst executed part to be the collecting of information about the applicant's certificates and permits into the employee database.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The research unveiled interesting results. The three respondents with the most insight into the current situation were in no means unanimous in their opinions on the current process. It became clear that the ideas and suggestions that came from the HR coordinator were more practical, concerning the tools he had at his use, and the practices that were part of his everyday work. The other two, who held managerial positions, concentrated more on the bigger picture. Their ideas and suggestions were not so specific and left more to be interpreted by the author. Issues like scheduling and time management, not getting the best candidates in for interviews, and the image that is portrayed of the company in the interviews, were some of them.

The goal of recruiting is to find the right people for the right positions. The secondary goal should be to get there in the most cost effective and time saving way. In MML-Group's case there is a constant need for hiring new people. Providing work force to work sites and taking on new projects, means that recruiting is an ongoing process. Some of the employees are only working for the duration of one project while others may stay on to work project after another. A lot of the job openings are for a certain type of construction worker with certain type of skills and expertise, for example railroad electrician or a carpenter. Very often the need for new work force comes suddenly and the recruitment must be done quickly.

This type of environment calls for a standardized and well structured recruitment process. When there are a lot of openings for the same type of worker the process can be streamlined after it has been established what kind of attributes are required of the applicant.

In many cases the Human resource coordinator gets information from the sales personnel that there is a need for new workforce. Too often this information is lacking and not specific enough. The sales personnel at MML-Group are familiar with most of the work themselves so the possibility of conveying more detailed information exists. The cooperation between sales personnel and the HR coordinator needs to be improved. A list of specific work activities and tasks delivered to the HR coordinator then allows him to create a job ad that attracts more suitable applicants. According to Dessler (2011, 145.)

a job analysis conducted in co-operation with the supervisor (in this case the sales person or a construction foreman), worker, and the HR specialist lists the most important aspects of the job from different perspectives. After the HR specialist has produced the list of job activities and duties, the supervisor and worker go through it to verify it. The HR coordinator and the former CEO both stated that the requirements and qualities are not defined specifically enough in the job ads. This supports the theory of lack of information from the field.

One of the main concerns the former CEO had was the interview phase of the process. Beginning from the fact that he believed that the company has failed in getting the best applicants in for an interview. The fact that MML-Group has only two offices, one in Tampere and one in Turku, is a factor. The company has open jobs all over Finland and the fact that interviews are held in Tampere or Turku when the job might be located near Rovaniemi, where the applicant is from, presents a problem. Often the jobs are temporary and there is not enough incentive for the applicant to make a 1000 km trip to Tampere just for an interview. In cases where there is a long distance between the applicant and the interviewer, the interview should be held over phone or a video interview should be arranged. Modern technology has made it possible to have a meaningful long-distance interview with very little effort.

The former CEO also believed that interviews are not portraying a professional enough image of the company. He feels there is not enough effort put into the interviews. One way to give a professional image of an interview is to use a highly structured interview model. Structured interviews are useful when the focus is to stay on work related issues and not let the discussion wander into irrelevant things.

Armstrong (2006, 441) states that interviews can lack validity in predicting the candidates' performance on the job and lack reliability in measuring the same things between different candidates. He also thinks that interviews can be reliant on the skill of the interviewer or lead to biased judgments on behalf of the interviewer. According to Armstrong a structured interview focusing on competences and attitudes required on the job helps in getting better results from the interview. He also believes that training interviewers and using other's opinions can help reduce bias.

Some interview forms are already in use at MML, but there is room for a higher level of structure. High level of structure also makes it easier for a less experienced or less skilled interviewer to conduct an interview properly, should the need arise.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire about current recruitment practicalities

Taustat

1. Nimi
2. Kauanko olet ollut yrityksen palveluksessa?
3. Mikä on asemasi yrityksessä?
4. Mitä työtehtäviisi kuuluu?

Rekrytointi

1. Mikä on roolisi uuden työntekijän rekrytointiprosessissa?
2. Mitä toimenpiteitä rekrytointi vaatii sinulta?
3. Onko käytössäsi sähköisiä apuvälineitä kuten tietokoneohjelmia tai valmiiksi laadittuja lomakkeita?
    a. Jos on, niin mitä ja missä vaiheessa rekrytointia niitä käytetään?
4. Montako työtuntia rekrytointiprosessi jokaisen rekrytoitavan kohdalla vie sinun ajastasi?
5. Kuinka moneen eri vaiheeseen rekrytointiprosessi on jaettu?
6. Luettele rekrytointiprosessin eri vaiheet.
7. Onko jaottelu mielestäsi onnistunut?
    a. Miksi ei?
8. Ovatko rekrytointiprosessin eri vaiheet mielestäsi roolitettu oikein?
    a. Jos ei, mitä muuttaisit?
9. Ovatko hakijat ja heiltä vaaditut ominaisuudet mielestäsi määritelty tarpeeksi hyvin?
10. Onko rekrytointi suunnattu mielestäsi oikeille kanaville?
11. Mitä rekrytointikanavia tällä hetkellä käytetään?
12. Tavoittavatko rekrytointi-ilmoitukset mielestäsi oikeanlaisia työnhakijoita?
13. Ovatko työpaikkailmoitukset mielestäsi laadittu oikein?
    a. Jos ei, mitä muuttaisit?
14. Onko hakijoille helposti saatavilla hyödyllistä lisäinfoa yhtiöstä ja työpaikasta esimerkiksi yhtiön kotisivuilla?
15. Onko mielestäsi parhaat hakijat saatu saapumaan työhaastatteluun?
16. Antaako työhaastattelu mielestäsi vaadittavan ammattitaitoisen kuvan yhtiöstä?
17. Panostetaanko työhaastatteluun mielestäsi tarpeeksi?
18. Mikä on mielestäsi rekrytointiprosessin parhaiten hoidettu osa?
    a. Miksi?
19. Mikä on mielestäsi rekrytointiprosessin huonoiten hoidettu osa?
    a. Miksi