

ASSESSMENT CENTRES - AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY OF TALENT ACQUISITION BY ORGANIZATIONS GLOBALLY

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Abstract

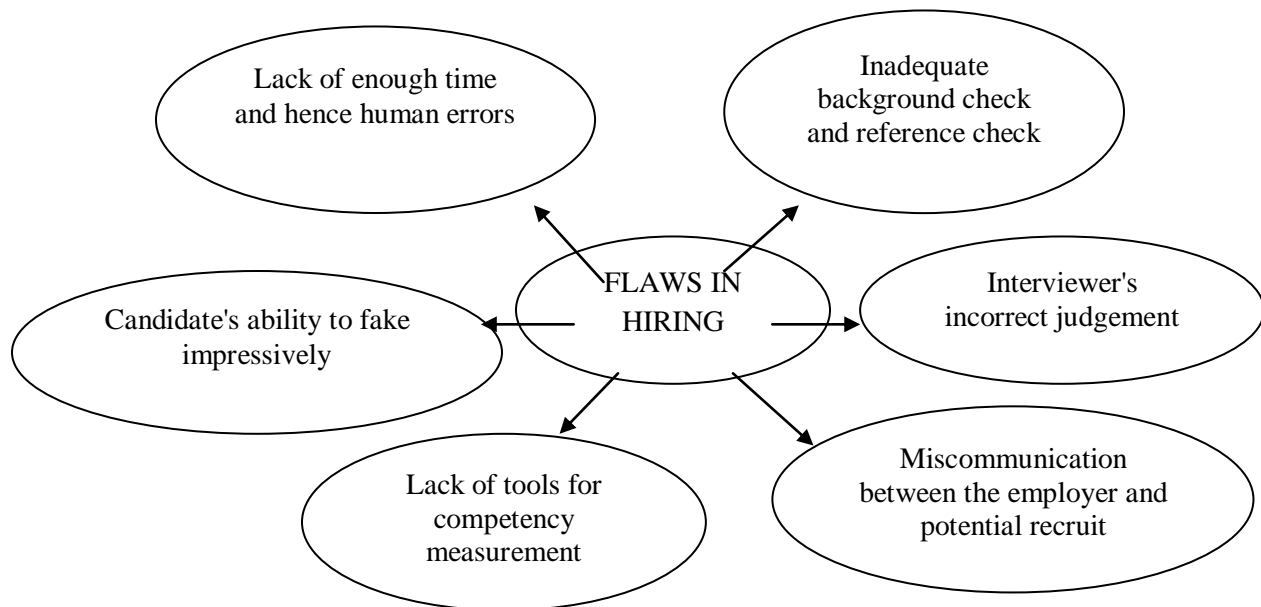
An effective organization consists of superior and effective workforce. To acquire an effective workforce requisite talent acquisition techniques are essential. Use of assessment centers helps a lot in talent acquisition. Assessment centres have variety of features including job analysis , behavioral classifications , multiple assessment techniques , multiple assessors , defining competencies , etc to name a few . Assessment centres help in getting better results of acquiring talent and the method is used globally by organizations.

Key Words: Assessment Centers , Talent Acquisition , Job Analysis , Multiple Assessors , Behavioral Classifications .

I. INTRODUCTION

To build a great organization you need to have a pool of talent workforce. Thus acquiring and developing the requisite talent is a right strategy for building a successful organization. The organizations are improving their talent acquisition methods to improve their effectiveness.

Assessment centre is an excellent tool to attract and acquire talented workforce. A properly designed assessment centre provides a number of benefits to organizations who intend to improve the robustness of talent acquisition procedure ultimately creating high performance driven culture. Assessment centre techniques can be extended human resource processes in which people are assessed, hired , promoted and appraised. Assessment Centers are scientific and logical way of obtaining and processing information thus helping the required human resource decisions.



Assessment centers provide highly relevant and wide-ranging information in view of the competencies required for a job role. An assessment centre is a scientific and systematic methodology consisting of a standardized evaluation of behaviour based on multiple assessment techniques. Multiple trained assessors and exercises are used. Observations, inferences and evaluations about behaviour are made, by observing participants behavior through requisite developed assessment exercises. These analyses are then compiled in an assessor meeting at the end of the process. Multiple judgments by multiple trained assessors add objectivity to the assessment centre methodology. Participants gain a lot of valuable insights through the processes that propels them in their personal and professional growth. All the said information helps the organization in effective decision-making including selection decisions, employee development and promotions.

To ensure effective talent management the organization should ensure the following :

The prospective workforce future and internal employees who were promoted, i.e., internal recruitment strategy of the company satisfy the necessary requirements in terms of the desired skill levels and other competencies necessary to fulfil job responsibilities. This can be well achieved through the assessment centre. Thus the assessment centre methodology is a very important pillar of attracting and acquiring talent both internally and externally.

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Assess the skill levels of current employees in order to create individual development plans and promote in-house growth, this is largely achieved through the assessment centre methodology thereby helping the organization in developing its talent.

Assessment centre plays a very vital role in accomplishing the goal of managing talent in the following ways:

It ensures that the new recruits or internally promoted employees have the necessary competencies and are in tune with the job requirements and organization culture.

They give the participants a close to real picture of the job role as they are assessed on activities that are part of the role they have applied for.

In addition to talent acquisition, assessment centers can also be used as an effective tool for talent development by identifying organizational and individual training gaps during the process. The assessment centre thus assists employees in becoming aware of their strengths and limitations which can be used as a starting point of required management development programs.

II. HISTORY OF ASSESSMENT CENTRES

Assessment centre process was first used between the two world wars. The Treaty of Versailles, which ended the First World War, prevented Germany from re arming and thus the traditional approach to the selection of officers, which was of observing their performance in war or in exercises was denied to them. German psychologists then devised this method which involved a combination of tests, simulations and exercises to identify the potential of officer candidates. The British Army used this methodology in the early days of Second World War when they established the War Office Selection Boards (WOSBs), again for the selection of officer candidates. Even today the SSB's in India uses a combination of exercises to select officers to train them for defence forces.

III. VARIOUS ROLES AND ADVANTAGES OF ASSESSMENT CENTRES

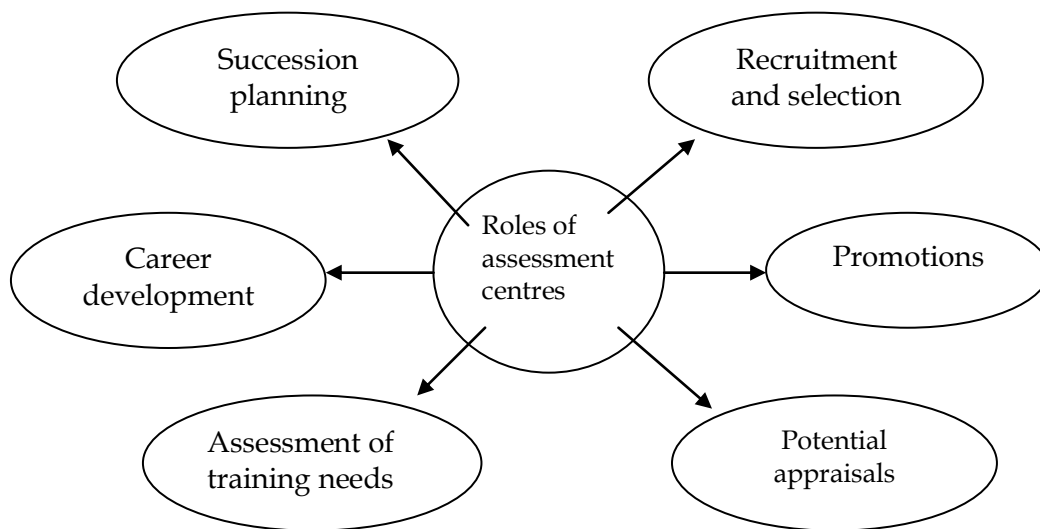
The assessment centres are used by organizations globally for the following:

- Recruitment and Selection

-- Assessment centres are used for taking hiring decisions.

- **Assessment of Training and Development Needs**

-- The assessment centre provides feedback as a result of assessor observations and behavioural analysis. The feedback provided helps in identifying the training needs of the candidate.



- **Potential Appraisal**

Assessment centres are used as centres of potential appraisal to measure and match a job incumbent's competencies for a particular future job role and predict a candidates chances of success on that role.

- **Career Development**

Another version of assessment centres is the development centers which are used for career development plans of existing employees.

• **Succession Planning**

Assessment centres are also used by organizations to plan and prepare replacement charts for higher levels in the organization to do succession planning process of the company.

• **Promotions**

Assessment centres are also used for making promotional decisions of employees.

IV. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A ASSESSMENT CENTRE

The following are the key elements of an assessment centres :

1. **Job Analysis:** Job Analysis is the complete understanding of the key responsibilities of a particular position and the competencies required to do the job successfully. The competencies identified through the job analysis process become the starting point of dimensions to be observed, measured and recorded at the assessment centre.
2. **Predefined Competencies:** Predefined Competencies are attitudes, knowledge, skills, traits, motives and any other aspect of an incumbents personality that differentiates the level of performance .
3. **Behavioral Classification:** At an assessment center the various types of behavior demonstrated by candidates during various activities are classified into various categories as dimensions, skills, attitudes and knowledge. The categorization assists the assessors to observe behavior and map the respective competencies with behavior . The competencies are also clustered. Different organizations interpret behavior accordingly through clusters.
4. **Multiple Assessment Techniques:** Multiple assessment techniques are also a key element in assessment centers. The various techniques include assessment games, exercises, activities and inventories. These techniques help in increasing the reliability of the talent acquisition methods of assessment centres . Various multiple assessment techniques are as below :
 - a) **Interviews**
 - b) **Case studies**
 - c) **Simulations**
 - d) **Management games**
 - e) **Group Discussions (GD)**

- f) **Role Playing**
- g) **Presentation**
- h) **Work Sample**
- i) **Aptitude tests**
- j) **Intelligence tests**
- k) **Psychometric tests**

5. Multiple Assessors: Having a perfect blend of assessors is the crux of an assessment centre . They should be having diverse specializations, should be free from any biases and be humane in nature .

6.Assessment Center Methodology: Assessment centres have specific methodology. Assessment centre duration may range from one day to three – four days. Competencies are measured to evaluate include leadership, directing, coordinating, decision making, communication skills, proactivity, flexibility, dealing with ambiguity and stress handling . Assessors observe the participants as accurately as possible without any barriers such as physical hindrances or otherwise.

V. CONCLUSION

Thus the use of assessment centres is an effective strategy for talent acquisition from internal as well as external resources . The methodology of adoption of assessment centres for talent acquisition is increasing day by day and is a win strategy.

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