Developing a Multiple Hurdle Approach to Hiring

Catina Smith, Ph.D. & Amanda D. Angie, Ph.D.
HR Research & Assessment Division
U.S. Secret Service

IPAC Conference July 2011
Washington, D.C.
Purpose & Objectives

- Discuss Considerations for Determining Selection Procedures
- Provide an Overview of Selection Strategy Options
- Discuss the Development and Use of a Multiple Hurdle Approach to Hiring
- Provide Some Applied Examples of Multiple Hurdle Selection Systems (including practice exercises)
You Have Identified the Job…

Now What?
Determine Your Selection Procedures

- There are several considerations to make when determining your selection procedures:
  - What does the job look like?
  - How many applicants will you have?
  - How much time do you have to hire?
  - How much will the process cost?
Assess the Job

- What does the job look like?
  - Conduct job analysis – gathering information about a job in an organization
  - Identify the critical KSAOs to be measured
  - Link assessment type to KSAOs

- Identify operational requirements
  - Extensive training
  - Specialty skills
Identify Your Applicant Pool

- How many applicants do you expect will apply for the position?
  - Entry-level positions may attract large numbers of applicants
  - Jobs requiring specialty skills, however, may have a much smaller number of applicants but may recruit from all over the country and even the world (e.g., computer programmers, engineers, etc.)
Establish a Timeline for Hiring

- Consider the amount of time you can devote to the process:
  - Do you need to fill the position immediately?
    - A shorter, less time consuming process is probably best
  - Are your hiring needs less urgent?
    - A longer, more comprehensive process may be appropriate (i.e., specialty positions)
Calculate Cost

- How much will the selection process cost?
  - Cost can be determined by:
    - Assessment type and administration requirements
      - E.g., paper-and-pencil tests tend to be less expensive than interviews
    - Applicant pool
      - E.g., location of applicants and number applying
    - Time for hiring
      - E.g., a lengthy testing process can be expensive
Why is this so Important?

- Minimizes selection decision errors:
  - False positives – an applicant passes through all selection phases and is hired, but is unsuccessful on the job
  - False negatives – an applicant is rejected but would have proved successful on the job

- Increases desired outcomes:
  - True positives – an applicant passes through all selection phases, is hired, and is successful on the job
  - True negatives – an applicant is rejected and would not have performed successfully on the job
Next Steps

- Once you have considered the factors that influence your selection procedures, how do you determine the selection strategy that best fits your needs?
- Choose a strategy that:
  - Maximizes the potential of your assessments
  - Provides a full view of the competencies you will measure
    - May require more than one assessment
  - Minimizes cost and provides quality applicants
  - Fits your hiring timeframe
Selection Strategies

- **Compensatory (a.k.a., Multiple Regression)**
  - *All assessments* are given to *all applicants* and scores are calculated to arrive at a total score

- **Multiple Cut-offs**
  - *All assessments* are given to *all applicants* and scored on a pass-fail basis

- **Combination Method**
  - *All assessments* are given to *all applicants* and the scores of those who pass are calculated and rank ordered

- **Multiple Hurdle**
  - *All applicants* must pass *each assessment* hurdle consecutively in order to continue in the process
Multiple Hurdle Approach

- Each assessment hurdle is scored as pass-fail and only applicants that pass may proceed to the next hurdle
  - Failure to pass a hurdle results in the applicant being dropped from further consideration

- This approach is most appropriate when:
  - Training is long, complex, and expensive
  - An essential KSA cannot be compensated for by high levels of other KSAs
  - Consequences of error in hiring are high (e.g., airline pilots, air traffic controllers, nuclear engineers, etc.)
An example of a multiple hurdle system:
The U.S. Secret Service
U.S. Secret Service Overview

- The Secret Service was established in 1865 under the U.S. Dept. of Treasury


- Secret Service dual mission:
  - To protect national leaders, visiting heads of state and government, designated sites and National Special Security Events
  - To safeguard the nation’s financial infrastructure and payment systems to preserve the integrity of the economy
The Special Agent Entry-Level Selection Process (Draft)

(Phase I)
- Basic Qualifications
- Special Agent Entrance Exam
- Applicant Physical Abilities Test

(Phase II)
- Initial Interview
- Security Interview

(Phase III)
- Polygraph Examination
- Report Writing Assessment
- Structured Panel Interview
- Medical Examination
- Background Investigation
- Conditional Offer
- Hiring Decision
The Special Agent Entry-Level Selection Process (Draft)

**PHASE I**
- Lowest Cost
- Least Time Consuming

**Basic Qualifications**

**Special Agent Entrance Exam**

**Applicant Physical Abilities Test**

(Phase I)

- Thousands of applicants
- Highest Impact
- Lowest Cost
- Competency Based
- A Minimum Requirement

(Phase III)

**Polygraph Examination**

**Report Writing Assessment**

**Conditional Offer**

(Phase II)

- Lowest Cost
- Least Time Consuming

**Structured Panel Interview**

**Initial Interview**

**Security Interview**

**Background Investigation**

**Hiring Decision**

United States Secret Service

Amanda D. Angie, Ph.D. & Catina M. Smith, Ph.D.
HR Research & Assessment Division
The Special Agent Entry-Level Selection Process (Draft)

**Phase I**
- Basic Qualifications
- Special Agent Entrance Exam
- Applicant Physical Abilities Test

**Phase II**
- More Time Consuming
- More Costly
- Essential Requirement
- Less Expensive than Background Inv. & Polygraph Examination (preparation)

**Phase III**
- Polygraph Examination
- Security Interview
- Structured Panel Interview
- Medical Examination
- Background Investigation
- Report Writing Assessment
- Initial Interview

**Notes:**
- Costly
- Time Consuming
- Lower Impact
- Competency Based
The Special Agent Entry-Level Selection Process (Draft)

PHASE III
- The MOST Time Consuming
- The MOST Expensive
- All Essential Requirements

(Phase III)

Polygraph Examination
- Very Expensive
- Very Time Consuming
- Essential Requirement

Structured Panel Interview
- Essential Requirement
- Very Expensive

Report Writing Assessment
- Very Expensive
- Very Time Consuming
- Essential Requirement

Medical Examination
- Very Expensive
- Very Time Consuming
- Essential Requirement

Background Investigation
- Very Expensive
- Very Time Consuming
- Essential Requirement

Applicant Physical Abilities Test

Conditional Offer

Initial Interview

Security Interview

Hiring Decision

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
United States Secret Service

Amanda D. Angie, Ph.D. & Catina M. Smith, Ph.D.
HR Research & Assessment Division
Applied Examples

- **FBI**
  - Logical reasoning test, Biodata, SJT
  - Panel interview and Writing test (essay)
  - Physical fitness test
  - Background investigation (w/ polygraph)
  - Medical exam

- **Microsoft**
  - Resumé review
  - First Interview
  - On-site Second Interview

- **Morgan Stanley**
  - Resumé review
  - Interview
  - Assessment Center

- **TSA**
  - Task-based training and experience measure
  - Logical reasoning test, SJT – video-based
  - Panel interview, Physical training assessment
  - Medical exam, Background investigation
What’s next……

Assessment ➔ System ➔ Development ➔ Hurdle ➔ Assessment ➔ Assessment

Amanda D. Angie, Ph.D. & Catina M. Smith, Ph.D.
HR Research & Assessment Division
July 2011
Determine Assessments

- Determine the assessments you will use in your process:
  - Use *existing* assessment(s)
  - *Develop your own* assessment(s)
  - Use *a combination of existing assessments* and develop your own
Structuring the Hurdle Process

- Determine the number of hurdles and the order of placement

  Consider:
  - The minimum requirements that an applicant must have to be successful in the job
  - The cost and time commitment: more expensive and time consuming assessments are typically placed at the end
  - The impact of the assessments on the applicant pool
  - Scoring of the assessments
  - Making the hiring decision

- There should always be a clear rationale for choices you make in your processes
Evaluate Your Selection Process

- Evaluate your selection process periodically and update accordingly
  - Conduct research on a consistent basis to evaluate:
    - If the requirements of the job have changed
    - If there are better measures available
    - If there is adverse impact in your process
    - Applicant reactions to your process
    - The quality of the applicants you have hired
Questions?
Activity:
Design a Multiple Hurdle System

You’re HIRED!!