3C. Selection

Selection is the process of choosing the candidate who best meets the criteria, based on the job description and job specification of that position created earlier (refer to section 3A.2C. above for more details). There are various selection methods and some are better than others under different circumstances, but no one technique is meant to be perfect.

The resources and costs involved in the recruitment process are also to be taken into account when selecting the tool. Below are some commonly used preliminary selection methods:

3C.1 Selection criteria

Before the selection process begins, one needs to define the selection criteria in order to be able to identify the most suitable candidate as a result.

Selection criteria:

✛ are job-related qualifications, experience, special skills, abilities or aptitudes

✛ can be the adaptability to fit into the company's culture

✛ can be the perceived potential and capacity to generate sustainable competitive advantages for the organization.

3C.2 Selection methods and processes

a. Application form/curriculum vitae

This is the basic source of candidate's employment information. It provides information for short-listing and help the interviewer structure the interview.

b. Standard scoring system

It is a system which gives every candidate a 'score' for further selection and the scores are to be assigned to competencies of:

✛ acquired skills

✛ knowledge

✛ experiences

✛ evidence of application of their talents to different circumstances or situations

✛ evidence of achievement in different settings.

Competencies are identified, prioritized and allocated a weighting. Then apply the 4-scale rating system to identify suitable applicants:

1 – show no evidence of the competency

2 – show some evidence of the competency

3 – show full evidence of the competency

4 – show evidence of the competency displayed at higher level than required

Standard scoring system is particularly suitable when standard application form is used. However, it requires that competencies for the job had been clearly specified.

c. Online screening of application forms

Using a customized program to compile, search and compare job applicants' information. Keywords or multiple criteria such as job skills, years of experience, education, study major, are used to preliminarily identify suitable candidates for further selection processes.

3C.3 Selection interview Do's & Don'ts

Table 3 below outlines the Do's and Don'ts of the interviewer:

	Interviewer Do's	Interviewer Don'ts
Before the interview	• Give clear instruction to the candidate about the date, time, venue and the name (and position) of the interviewer • Be knowledgeable yourself with the job, the structure and the reporting line of the job • Ensure the interviewing environment (room temperature, lighting, seating arrangement) is agreeable and comfortable • Have a copy of the job description and organization chart (if available) in case of need for clarity	• Leave the candidate waiting for too long for no reason • Assume that you know the job well unless the interviewer is the immediate line manager • Give the wrong interview information/details to the candidate
During the interview	• Greet the candidate warmly and introduce yourself • Be courteous, enthusiastic and sincere because the candidate will be inclined to view the opportunity more positively • Focus on the job requirements and elaborate when asked • Prepare open-ended questions for the candidate to elaborate on their skills, experiences and knowledge • Give the candidate the chance to elaborate on their credentials or to ask questions • Maintain good eye contact with candidate to show interest and to observe their behaviours	• Go straight into interviewing without introducing who you are • Start interrogating or challenging the candidate on the content of the CV • Ask close-ended questions (ie. yes or no answers) • Ask leading questions (eg. What do you think of the horrible effect of building a waste treatment plant in Tseung Kwan O?) • Divert/digress into something which is totally irrelevant to the job • Do all the talking without giving the candidate the chance to sell themselves or to ask questions
After the interview	• Inform candidate of the possible next step • Allow some flexibility of deadline for the candidate to reply acceptance. Nonetheless, a deadline is necessary so as to put some pressure for a reply • Your message should be sincere and brief with a positive note as ending, if the candidate is found not suitable • Thank the candidate for coming to the interview	• Give the wrong impression of candidate's status of success or failure • Insist on an immediate acceptance of the job • Tell the candidate bluntly that they are not suitable • Walk out of the interview room with a grim face and not thanking the candidate

Common errors made by interviewer in selection interviews

The selection decision is a matter of human judgment. Decisions could be influenced by personal perception, preference and judgment, which may lead to the hiring of less desirable employees. People are often unaware of biases of themselves and how they affect the hiring decisions.

a. Bias

Contrast effect - give a candidate a higher-than-deserved rating when he or she is interviewed immediately after a weak candidate, or vice versa

Similarity effect - give higher ratings to candidates who resemble the interviewer in terms of values, beliefs, thinking etc. and overshadow the negatives

First impression error - form a lasting overall reaction to candidates based on first impression

Stereotyping - assume all members of a group share characteristics which is typical to that group, which might lead to poor hiring decisions

b. Prejudice

Interviewers start to evaluate candidates on the basis of their résumés or recommendations, and would let these prejudgments lead the way when conducting the interview.

Personal beliefs and values may lead interviewers to ask same questions and but make different judgment.

c. Discrimination

It means favour one candidate against another on grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin or age.

Direct discrimination means treating someone less favourably based on gender, marital status or race.

Indirect discrimination arises from a requirement or condition which theoretically applies equally to everyone but in practice puts a gender group, racial group or married persons at a disadvantage because they have greater difficulty in meeting the requirement or condition.

Discrimination can be illegal.

3C.4 Background/reference check

Before an offer is made and wherever applicable, feasible or appropriate, you should conduct work reference checks from candidate's previous employers on information such as employment date, attendance record, last salary, etc.

If reference check can only be performed after an offer is made, a condition can be clearly stated in the offer that employment will only be valid upon successful reference check.

You should secure a signed permission from the candidate before conducting such checks in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. When reference checking, only check for work-related information and do not ask questions about age, race, colour, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or marital status to avoid discrimination issues.

If the job nature requires so, you must take precaution and observe the legal requirements when requesting for the following special reference checks:

✤ Credit history check – this is only undertaken if the job requires cash-handling or handle financial transactions

✤ Medical history check – this may be checked by undergoing a medical examination

✤ Criminal history check – this check can only be confined to job-related convictions and must inform the applicant that a conviction record will not necessarily bar them from employment.