



Emerging Issues in Private Emergency Medical Transportation: Turnover, Demand & Selection Part3

Behavioral-Based Interviews

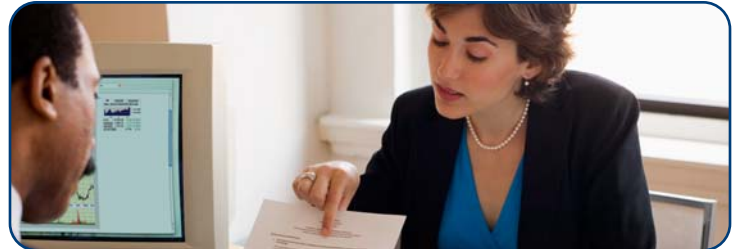
"...based on decades of research, we also know that there are many characteristics of the employees themselves that contribute to turnover. Indeed, recent research published in a highly-reputable, peer-reviewed journal indicates that employee characteristics are more powerful predictors of turnover than are workplace characteristics. (e.g., Zimmerman, 2008)."

Among organizational decision-makers, interviews are widely acknowledged as the most frequently used and important selection device (Posthuma, Morgeson, & Campion, 2002). In fact, more than 96% of all organizations use some sort of selection interview. Because of its widespread use and importance, organizational specialists have studied the interview for more than 80 years. Until recently, however, the overwhelming majority of these studies produced negative conclusions regarding the interview's usefulness and utility for selection purposes. In a nutshell, interviews (as commonly practiced) are not very good at predicting on-the-job behavior. In fact, they are seemingly worthless. Over time, selection researchers have come to realize that this lack of utility is due to the use of inappropriate, non-job-related questions during the interview, interviewer over-confidence in his/her ability to predict good employees, bias, and other extraneous factors that influence an interviewer's evaluation of an applicant (Kinicki, Lockwood, Hom, & Griffeth, 1990; Wilk & Capelli, 2003). Findings such as these prompted other work which developed corrections for these deficiencies.

A specific technique for increasing the utility of the interview is to ask applicants behavior-based questions ("Can you tell me about a time when you...") and to use a standardized format and a standardized scoring system to rate applicants. To date, behavior-based interviews have been linked to a number of important organizationally relevant outcomes such as job performance, tenure and turnover (Krietner & Kinicki, 2007). More specifically, in a recent study of 14 organizations (including international finance, energy, and health care organizations) that began using behaviorally-based structured interviews, turnover decreased an average of 44% (Salgado & Moscoso, 2002).

About the Author

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Personality Assessment

In addition to the use of behavior-based interviews, many organizations employ the use of personality tests to predict important job-related behaviors. In fact, a recent survey found that more than 40% of Fortune 100 companies use personality tests to screen entry-level applicants (Gatewood, Field, & Barrick, 2008). Another line of research found that personality assessment in high school could predict on-the-job behavior over 50 years later (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999).

Intuitively, most managers agree that personality traits - those things that people habitually say, think, and do - matter at work (Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones, 1995), and the research conducted on personality in the workplace backs up this notion. Selection researchers have found that personality tests, when used appropriately, can provide crucial information when making selection decisions. For example, in a comprehensive study analyzing the results of over 85 studies, personality factors were found to play a very important role in determining who will remain on the job and who will turnover across a wide range of occupations and industries (Zimmerman, 2008).

More specific to the transportation industry, in a recent case study a Southeast Michigan transportation company with 150 employees and an annual 45.2% turnover rate added a pre-employment personality test to their selection system. After two years, turnover was reduced to 10.7% at a savings of about a half a million dollars per year (Krietner & Kinicki, 2007).

Summary

Overall, there has been much time and effort expended by organizational researchers over the last 80 years to provide decision-makers in organizations with research-based solutions for reducing turnover. This research strongly indicates that that a combination of new employee assessment tools, including behavior-based interviews and job-related personality assessments predict with a high degree of accuracy which applicants will turn over.

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