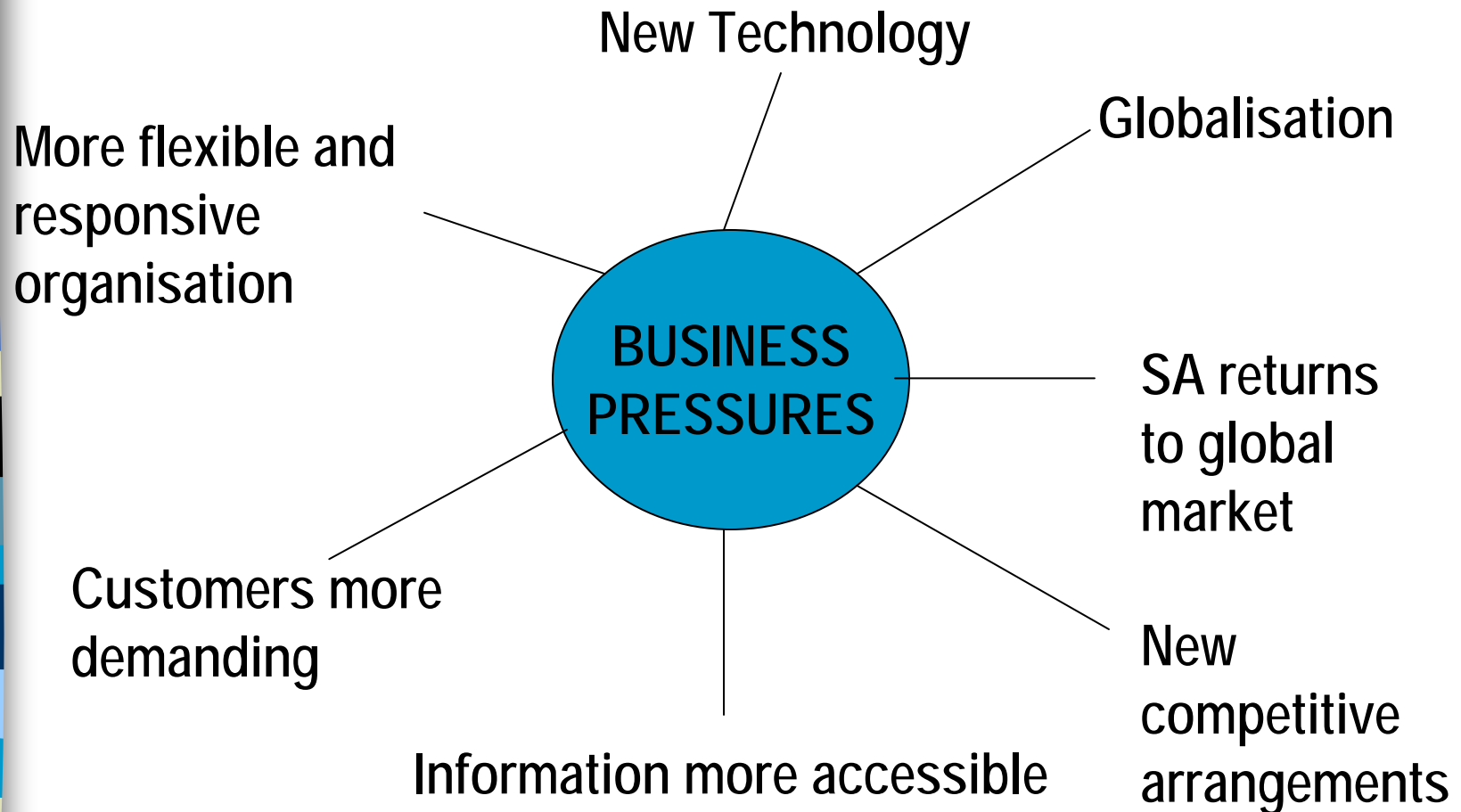


REVISITING THE VALIDITY OF ASSESSMENT CENTRE TECHNIQUES IN THE COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT ERA

Presenter: Natasha Müller

POST-1994





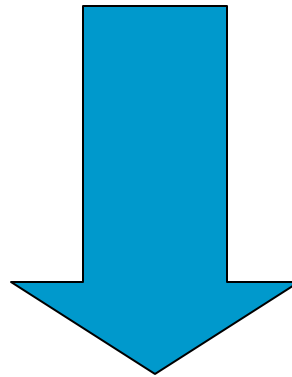
THE GLOBAL REALITY

- Product/service offerings similar
- Various technologies more accessible
- Competition is tougher

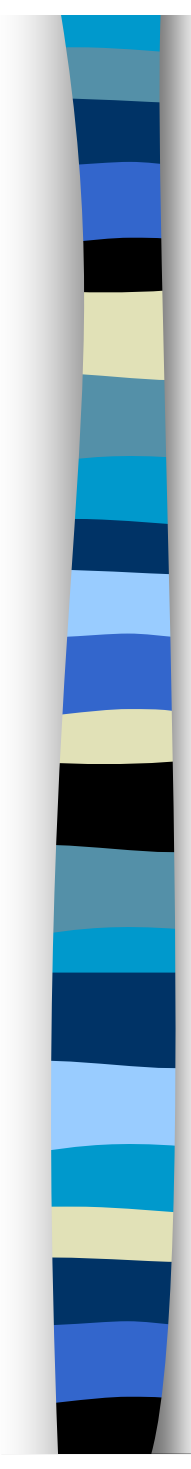


IMPLICATIONS FOR HRM

- HR becomes the only competitive advantage

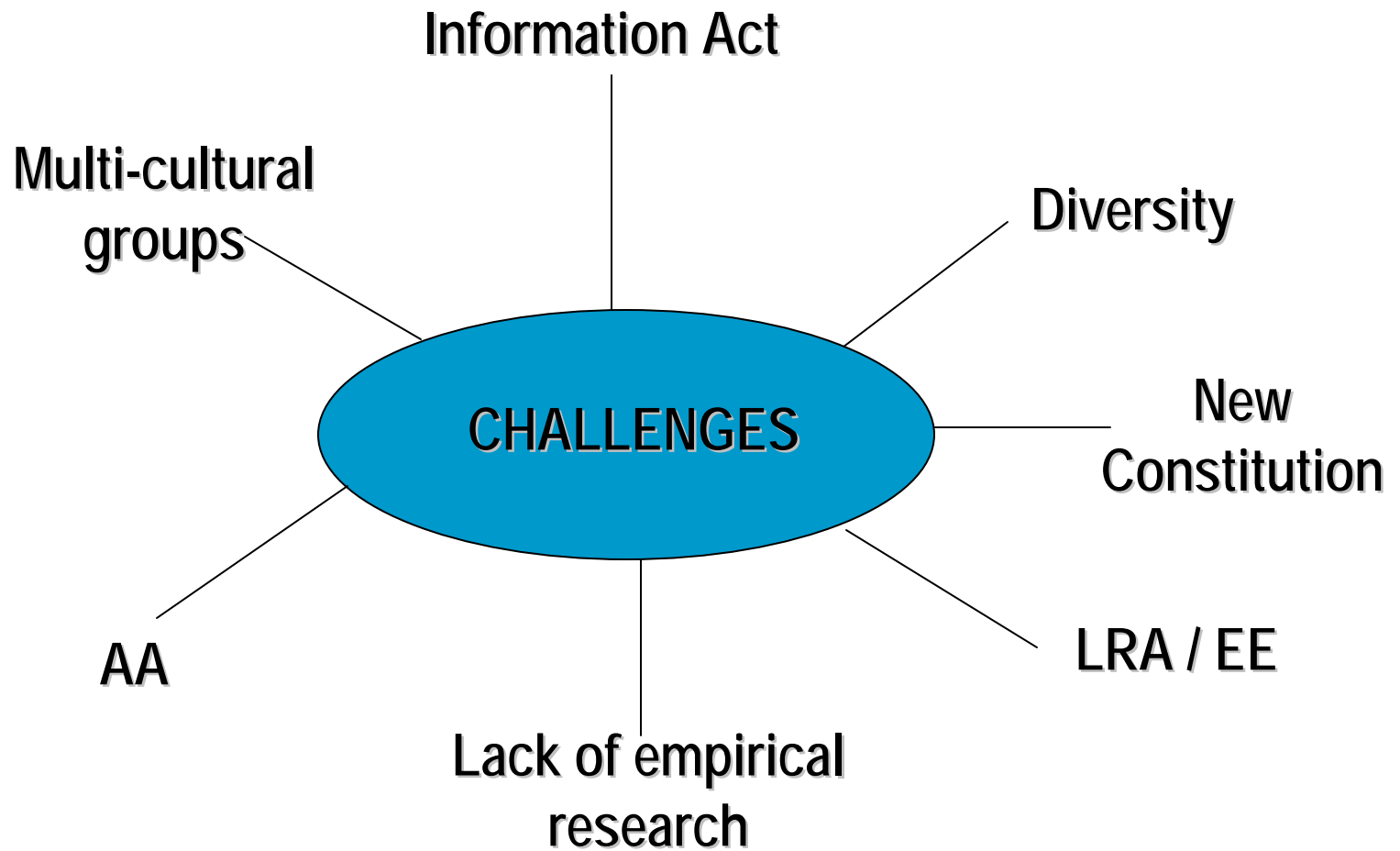


- Direct impact on selection decisions made



“Personnel Selection Practitioners’
predictions about whether an
applicant will succeed at the job or
not, is the very thread on which the
success of the organization is built”

(Byham, 1995)





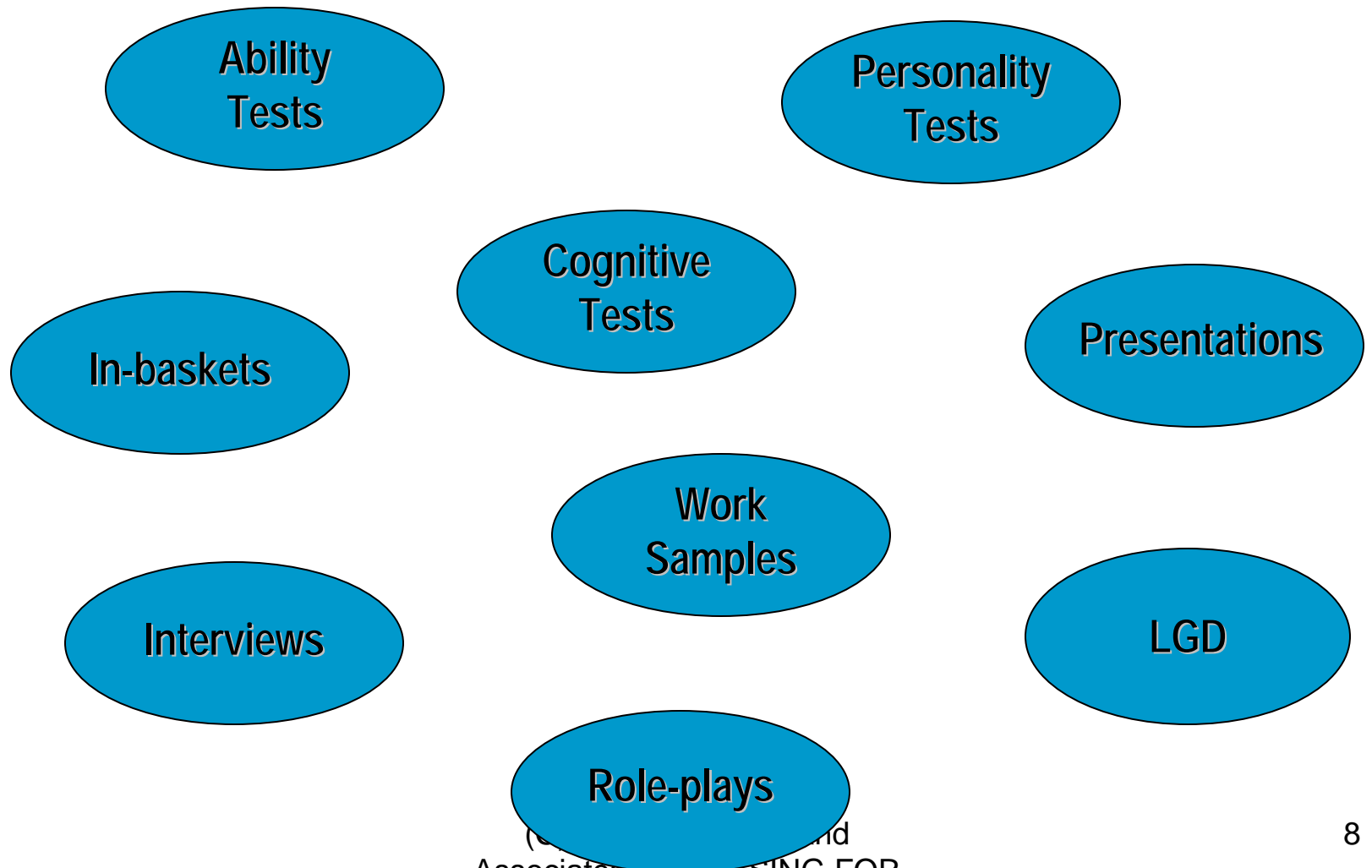
Pre-1994

- Limited JA
- Unstructured IV's
- Culturally biased psychometric tests
- Reliance on paper with pencil tests
- Selection decision based on gut feel
- Limited validity studies

Post-1994

- Rigorous JA
- Structured IV's
- Competency-based selection techniques
- Re-emergence of behavioural techniques
- Selection decisions based on inherent job requirements
- Ongoing validity studies

Selection Techniques



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WHICH TECHNIQUES ARE THE BEST PREDICTORS OF JOB PERFORMANCE?

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Techniques:

- Assessment Centres
- Interviews (BEI)
- Work Sample Tests
- Ability Tests
- Personality Tests
- Biodata
- References
- Interviews (Non-BEI)

Validities:

- .65
- .48 - .61
- .54
- .53
- .39
- .38
- .23
- .05 - .19

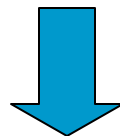


SOUTH AFRICAN RESEARCH

ASSESSMENT CENTRE



.37



n = 110

Spangenberg, Esterhuyze, Visser, Briedenham & Calitz, 1989

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are currently very few documented validity studies in South Africa relating to competency-based selection techniques.



AIMS AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- To identify the predictive value of a selection of competency-based assessment techniques, i.e.
 - * Role-play/simulations
 - * Presentations
 - * In-baskets
- To add to the body of knowledge relating to the topic



Definition of Terms

Competency-based Assessments:

Focuses on the measurement of identified competencies

(Spencer & Spencer, 1993)

Assessment Centre:

An assessment approach which combines multiple assessment techniques in an integrated manner in order to predict job performance.

(Cook, 1998; Jansen & de Jongh, 1997; Schneider & Schmitt, 1986; Wellin, 1984).

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Definition of Terms

Role-play:

The role-play is the simulation of one-to-one interactions. ...Role-plays are often referred to as dialogues.

(Boam & Sparrow, 1993)

In-trays/In-baskets:

...are an attempt to simulate paper work that managers have to deal with on a regular basis.

(Jansen & de Jongh, 1997)



Definition of Terms

The Presentation:

...popular in jobs where the incumbents find themselves speaking in front of a group audience.

...this is especially true for jobs that focus on liaison or public relations.

(Boam & Sparrow, 1993)



Definition of Terms

Validity:

...is the most important consideration in test evaluation. It refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the specific inferences made from test scores. Test validation is the process of accumulating evidence to support such inferences.

(American Psychological Association and National Council on Measurement in Education, 1985)

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Definition of Terms

Concurrent Validity:

...refers to calculating the relationship between the predictor and the criterion by obtaining scores on both at the same time, usually from a sample of current employees.

Blunt and Popoola (1985)

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ASSUMPTIONS

- **Competencies identified through job analysis**
- **Selection techniques selected or developed by suitably qualified professionals**
- **Off-the-shelf and customised techniques used**

SAMPLE

- Workers from a large financial services institution.
- Drawn from three separate work units to increase representivity of techniques.
- $N = 71$



SAMPLE (CONT.)

- **Clerical Workers (n=25)**
 - 7 B; 14 C and 4W
 - 13 M; 12 F
 - Age = 18-27
 - Education = 16 Secondary ; 9 Tertiary

- **CSM / Consultant (n=23)**
 - 2 B; 0 C and 21 W
 - 10 M; 13 F
 - Age = 24-49
 - Education = 1 Secondary ; 22 Tertiary

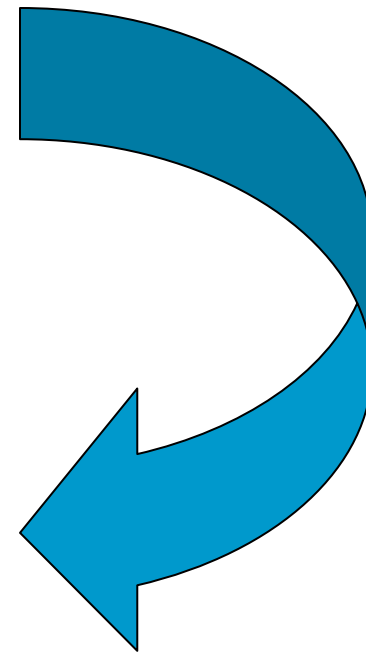
- **Sales Consultants (n=23)**
 - 2 B; 0 C and 21 W
 - 13 M; 10 F
 - Age = 23-49
 - Education = 11 Secondary ; 12 Tertiary



MEASURES

- In-baskets
- Role Plays
- Presentations

Part of Assessment Centre





ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

CLERICAL

- BEI
- VERBAL REASONING
- NUM. REASONING
- CLERICAL CHECKING
- CLASSIFICATION
- IN-BASKET

CSM / CONS

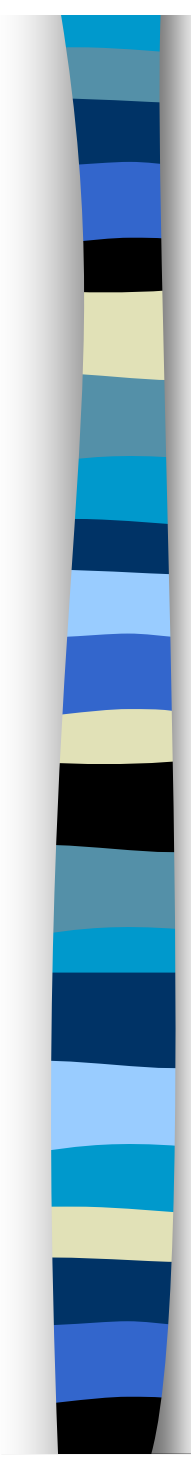
- BEI
- VERBAL REASONING
- PERSONALITY
- PRESENTATION
- ROLE PLAY
- IN-BASKET

SALES

- BEI
- VERBAL REASONING
- PERSONALITY
- PRESENTATION
- ROLE PLAY
- NUM. REASONING

FOR EXAMPLE: CSM

COMPETENCIES	BEI	VR	PERS	RP	PRES	IB
TKS	✓				✓	✓
BUILD. REL.	✓		✓			
SEEK BUS. OPP.	✓		✓			✓
ADVISING / INF.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PLAN & ORG.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
STRESS TOLER.			✓		✓	
ADMIN & REVIEW			✓			✓
WRITTEN COMM.						✓
CLIENT INTER.				✓		✓
REPRESENTING				✓	✓	
INFLUENCING				✓	✓	
PROBLEM SOLV.				✓	✓	✓



COMPTENCY TITLE	COMPETENCY DEFINITION
Advising/ Informing	Communicating effectively by adjusting style, language and terminology to the needs of the audience in order to convey all relevant information to involved stakeholders; and offering professional advice whilst achieving a desired end result.
Technical and Professional Knowledge and Skills	Having achieved a satisfactory level of technical and professional skills/ knowledge in job related areas; whilst keeping abreast of current developments/ trends in area of expertise.
Client Interaction	Working effectively with internal and external business partners in order to achieve job objectives, whilst displaying genuine concern for clients' needs.
Written Communication	Collating information into written format with clarity.
Problem -Solving	Committing to an appropriate action after exploring relevant alternatives.
Sensing Business Opportunities	Sensing new business opportunities; picking up clues, and persistently pursuing and exploiting business opportunities.
Planning and Organising	Using a systematic, yet flexible approach to achieve work objectives by making use of available resources.
Administrating and Reviewing	Ability to complete routine administration and maintain detailed records; whilst checking information for accuracy.
Stress tolerance	Handling disappointment, obstacles or rejection, while maintaining effectiveness.



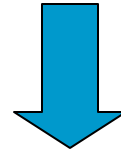
PROCEDURE

- Participants solicited by respective managers.
- Dependent on their availability re: work commitments.
- Data collected by Psychometrists / Psychologists

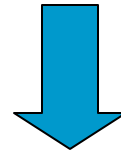


THE APPROACH

DEVELOP COMPETENCY MODELS



SELECT OR DEVELOP ASSESSMENT METHODS



TRAIN / EDUCATE ASSESSORS



ASSESS CANDIDATES



1-5 POINT RATING SCALE

1. **Little or no evidence of the desired behaviour.**
2. **Some evidence of the desired behaviour – development required.**
3. **Displays competent behaviour ; average performance.**
4. **Displays most elements of the desired behaviour / competence most of the time.**
5. **Consistently displays behaviour which exceeds the required level of competence.**

IN-BASKETS



→ **CLERICAL WORKERS (GENERIC)**

→ **CONSULTANTS / CSM'S (CUSTOMISED)**



COMPLETED IN 1 GROUP SITTING EACH

ROLE PLAYS



→ **SALES CONSULTANT (CUSTOMISED)**

→ **CONSULTANTS / CSM'S (OFF-THE-SHELF)**



COMPLETED IN 1 INDIVIDUAL SITTING EACH



PRESENTATIONS

→ **SALES CONSULTANT (CUSTOMISED)**

→ **CONSULTANTS / CSM'S (CUSTOMISED)**



COMPLETED IN 1 INDIVIDUAL SITTING EACH



STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

- Correlation coefficients = primary method of data analysis
- Means and standard deviations were also highlighted.
- SPSS for Windows used to analyse data.

RESULTS

TABLE 7: SUMMARY OF THE NO. OF COMPETENCIES THAT SHOWED SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN INSTRUMENT AND PERFORMANCE RATINGS

INSTRUMENT USED	TOTAL NO. OF COMPETENCIES MEASURED BY THIS INSTRUMENT	NO. OF COMPETENCIES WHERE SIGNIFICANT CORRELATIONS WERE FOUND
Clerical In-basket	4	0
Consultant/ Client Services Manager In-basket	8	5
Consultant/ Client Services Manager Role Play	6	6
Sales Consultant Role Play	5	0
Consultant/ Client Services Manager Presentation	6	3
Sales Consultant Presentation	4	0



LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Small sample size limits generalisability.
- Sample not randomly selected.
- Sample not representative of S.A demographics
- Only parts of full AC were validated.
- Not all management raters trained.
- Some customised tools not piloted.
- Managers not able to provide accurate performance ratings.

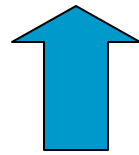


IMPLICATIONS

- To investigate culture fairness of techniques a bigger more representative sample should be included.
- Concurrent and/or predictive validity studies should be undertaken in a variety of industries to reach more conclusive and comprehensive findings.



LEARNINGS



VALIDITY

- **Classic competency selection strategy design**
- **Customised / carefully selected techniques**
- **Pilot study**
- **Raters Trained**
- **High level of collaboration**



GUIDELINES FOR BEST PRACTICE

- The most effective selection strategies share three goals, namely:
 1. Buy-in
 2. Equity
 3. Accuracy

(Byham, 1995)



CONCLUDING COMMENTS

(Natasha Müller: Contact No. 082 8535998)

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