



Selection vs Development Assessment Centers: An International Survey

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ACs are used for different purposes:

- Adult development
- Early identification of management potential
- Promotion of supervisors
- Diagnosis of development needs
- Heighten learning and development
- Premise: ACs used for different purposes should be designed in different ways



Different instantiations of basic requirements of all ACs

- Different dimensions
- Different exercises
- Different observation/rating methods
- Different methods of intergration
- Different feedback
- etc



Purpose of current study:

- International bench marking survey of ACs used for:
 - Prediction: selection, promotion
 - Development: diagnosis, learning



Previous surveys

- Spylchalski et al (1997): US organizations
- Kudisch et al (2001): international sample
- Krause & Gebert (2003): German speaking countries vs US



Method

- On-line survey with 76 items
- Americas, Europe, Asia
- Usable responses
 - 70 ACs for selection or promotion
 - 74 ACs for diagnosis or learning



Results:

- Comparison of usage in prediction vs development ACs



Organization characteristics

- Prediction programs
 - Smaller orgs
 - Services, transportation, retail, gov
 - ACs started before 2004
- Development programs
 - Larger orgs
 - Electronics, manufacturing, communication
 - ACs started in 2004 or later



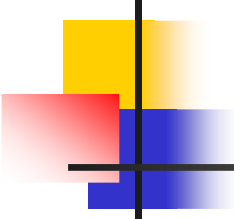
Uses of AC information

- Prediction programs
 - Advancing person's career
- Development programs
 - Diagnosis of training needs
 - Stabilization of leadership culture



Job Analysis: done in virtually all programs

- Prediction programs
 - Questionnaires
 - Observations
 - New competency models
- Development programs
 - Existing competency models



Role of the *Guidelines*: used in majority of ACs

- Prediction programs
 - More frequently used
- Development programs



Design and execution of AC

- Prediction programs
 - Shorter (1 day)
- Development programs
 - Longer (2 days)



Dimensions

- The vast majority assess some dimension related to communication, consideration, drive, influencing others, organization and planning, problem solving



Dimensions

- Prediction programs
 - More assess planning and organizing
 - Smaller number of dimensions (25% assess 6+)
- Development programs
 - Larger number of dimensions (65% assess 6 +)
 - More assess consideration, drive, influencing others



Participants

- Prediction programs
 - Host all levels of personnel
 - Selected by personnel ratings
- Development programs
 - Tend to host first level managers
 - Nominated by supervisor

Assessors

Most typically HR reps and managers



- Prediction programs
 - Executives/higher level managers
 - Serve as evaluators
- Development programs
 - Internal HR reps
 - Serve as moderators or developers



Assessor Training: Many *Guidelines* followed

- Prediction programs
 - Knowledge of organization, target job, and dimensions; consistency in roles; relation of dimensions to job performance
 - Methods include video demos, practice
- Development programs
 - How to observe independently, methods of observation and feedback



Exercises

- Common stable: in basket, presentation, group discussion, case
- Prediction programs
 - Role play, background I, situational I, planning
- Development programs
 - In basket, presentation, case, discussion



Preparation of Participants: All programs do this

- Prediction programs
 - Dimensions to be assessed, expected behaviors
- Development programs
 - Objective of program, information on assessors, use of results, how feedback will be given, what recommendations will come



Integration of Assessment Information

Equal numbers of both type programs use either a consensus discussion OR a combination of statistical integration and discussion



Feedback: All programs provide feedback to participant

- Prediction programs
 - Feedback to Dept head
- Development programs
 - Feedback to immediate supervisor
 - Provide feedback on behaviors observed in each exercise on each dimension



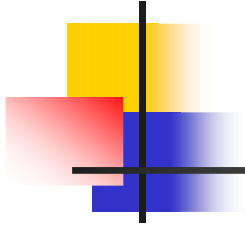
Evaluation of AC program: did not differ across type of AC

- Prediction programs
- Development programs
 - Ask about usefulness, transparency



Differences: Features more prevalent in Selection ACs

- Questionnaires used in job analysis
- Guidelines used more frequently
- Dimensions emphasize cognitive abilities
- Assessors are evaluators
- Assessors come from internal HR
- Pool of assessors are ethnically balanced

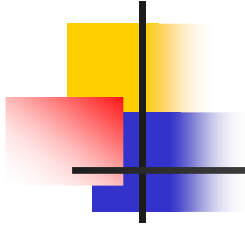


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- Assessors are trained on org and job
 - Tailor made exercises for each AC



Developmental ACs

- Use existing competency models
- ACs are longer
- Larger number of dimensions
- Dimensions include interpersonal and intra personal characteristics
- Assessors are moderator and developer
- External psychologists are used



- Assessors are trained to observe independently
- Personality tests are used



Areas where *Selection* programs SHOULD differ but did NOT

- Computers should be used to enhance standardization
- Participants should be given more information to ensure fairness
- Information should be integrated statistically to be objective



Areas where *Development ACs* SHOULD differ but did NOT

- Assess fewer dimensions to ensure actual development/learning
- Train assessors to distinguish among dimensions to ensure discrimination
- Use more self- and peer-ratings to broaden perspective and acceptance
- Provide assessment/feedback/
assessment/feedback
- Provide feedback to managers to ensure follow-up



Conclusions

- ACs are used for different purposes
- For different purposes, ACs should logically be designed differently
- In many features, ACs ARE being designed differently
- In other features, ACs ARE NOT being designed optimally to meet stated purposes



Theme of the presentation

- There is both continuity and change in ACs over the years
- ACs are plastic: they ARE being run differently and they SHOULD be run differently