MGMT 4020

Group Project:
Development of a Selection System

Since the best way to learn is by doing, the project for this course involves developing an actual hiring system for a real-world organization. Students consistently say this is a lot of work, but is also the most rewarding part of the course. Since it's a pretty complex project that most of you have never done before, it can also be a bit confusing. I've tried to describe what you need to do in detail in this document, but I encourage you to discuss as a team (early!) and ask any and all questions of me that you want.

What does the project involve?

In order to develop a hiring system, you first need to identify the key duties/responsibilities of the job and what qualifications are required to do the job well. This is called a "job analysis," and we will cover this in the first three weeks of class. At that point, you should start scheduling interviews and observations at the organization that you've identified that you're going to work with. Plan to interview the manager of the position, as well as *at least* three other subject matter experts (SMEs). SMEs are people who know the job well and can explain it, and its requirements, to you. SMEs are usually people doing the job, although they can also include people who did the job in the past, others in the organization who work with people in the job, customers, etc. I suggest you plan to conduct this data-gathering phase of your project in late September and write up what you did and what you learned in early October. Don't wait until November to write this up, because you'll need the information for the second phase of the project. Plus you can then "check it off" and feel less pressured at the end of the semester!

In the second phase of the project, you'll use the information you collected in the job analysis to develop a recommended hiring system. This can be started in mid-October as we begin to discuss the various hiring tools, and should be nearly finished by the time you leave for Fall/Thanksgiving break.

During or immediately after break you can put the finishing touches on the project, as we will have covered all the class material you need for the project before the break. Although it's due December 6, there's no reason you couldn't turn it in by the end of November and have it done and out of the way.

What kind of job should you choose?

You can pick any job in any organization that you like. But to make your life simpler, I suggest that you pick a job that:

- most of the team is generally unfamiliar with (to reduce bias that might affect your report).
- college students could imagine applying for (either full time or vacation employment is OK; it doesn't have to be a career job); this makes the mock interviews easier.
- has multiple incumbents currently holding the job (this makes it MUCH easier to gather information).
- you find interesting (optional, but makes it more fun)

Examples of jobs that have been chosen in the past include travel agent, car salesman, ice cream scooper, computer lab advisor, waitstaff, retail clerk, coffee shop barista, firefighter, residence hall advisor, hotel front desk clerk, school teacher, bank teller, daycare provider, fork lift operator, newspaper reporter, campus police officer, etc.

Where do you find the job?

Anywhere you want. While most teams choose jobs in the private sector, you can also work with public sector organizations (e.g., cities, county, state, university) or non-profit organizations. It's easier to work with organizations that:

- Don't have an extensive HR organization (because they stand more to gain from your work, and will also have fewer people you'll need to get permission from)
- Are local. You will need to conduct multiple interviews and also observe the work, which is difficult if the organization is located far away. (Even Fort Collins and Denver have proven challenging for teams in the past.)
- Are willing to spend some time with you. This is critical; be sure the contact knows what you will need from them (primarily about an hour of time from 4 – 5 employees) and commits to making that available to you.

Usually, teams work with companies in which they have some kind of personal contact (family, friend, past or current employer), although "cold-calling" can also be successful. If you use the company you're currently working with, make sure you feel comfortable that the project won't risk your relationship with the company.

By the fourth week of class, each team should turn in a completed Project Planning Form describing the organization and job they plan to use. But don't wait for the deadline! Start talking to potential companies ASAP so you can get their commitment well before the deadline.

What should be included in your project report?

I've outlined below the minimum requirements for the paper; these are the things that must be included in your report. There will also be a separate handout on the key steps in job analysis that will help guide you, and you can also review the scoring form I use to grade the project report (at end of this document). But remember my general philosophy for the course: most of you are nearly done with your time at Leeds and are preparing to enter the world of work (or of graduate school). As such, I'm expecting you to use this project as an example of all the professional skills you've developed. **So an "A" paper will go beyond these basic requirements, and show extra attention to doing the *best project possible* (rather than the minimum to get by).** In particular, the more you provide "added value" to your client, the better your chance of getting an "A."

1. A detailed description of how you performed the job analysis and why you did it that way. This should include a discussion of how you collected the information and *why* your procedures were appropriate for your particular application. (Be sure to include a discussion of alternative approaches you decided not to use and why you expected your approach to be better.) Describe who you chose as subject matter experts (how many, how they were chosen), and why. You should also discuss the limitations of your approach, both those anticipated in advance and those learned the hard way (be honest!)
2. A copy of your job analysis documentation (interview notes, questionnaire responses, etc.) This need not be complete; e.g., if you used questionnaires I don't want to see every completed questionnaire, but I do want to see a summary of the responses. (One good way to do this is to include a copy of your survey or interview that includes a summary of the answers to each question. This can be included in an Appendix if you wish; if you do so, be sure to summarize the information in the body of your report and then *explicitly* refer to the Appendix in case the reader wants more information.) This section should form the basis for defending your performance attributes (see # 5).
3. A job description, using either the sample format or the format (but not the exact content)

used by the organization. (If the latter doesn't conform to the sample I will provide, you should add whatever elements are missing.)

4. A copy of the O*Net summary of the job you analyzed. Again, this can be placed in an appendix, but be sure to explicitly indicate that in the body of the report.
5. Performance attributes (KSAOs) *and their rationale*. <u>This should include Risk and Fit Factors</u>. Clearly explain why you feel they are critical, and how you determined that. This is best done by linking them specifically with the critical tasks or outcomes; many teams have done this by using a table or matrix. (Don't forget to filter out those that are either not critical or not needed at the time of hire.)
6. Your proposed selection system. This should include a reasonably detailed description of the hiring tools you propose to use and how to use them. *Perhaps the best guide to how detailed the report should be is that it should be written so that the organization you worked with will know how to implement your recommendations*. Be sure that all the parts of the selection system fit together. For example, if your Performance Attributes Matrix says that customer service and attention to detail are being measured in the interview, be sure that your interview scoring guide shows *how* these attributes are being scored.
   - A Performance Attributes Matrix (be sure it matches with both the attributes you listed earlier and the hiring tools you describe later).
   - Your recommended interview protocol (and scoring system). This should be understandable to your client organization.
   - A reference checking form.
   - EITHER a customized application form OR a critical review of the form currently being used (including recommendations as to how it needs to be modified)
   - If you recommend the use of standardized tests, list the suggested test(s) and describe the rationale for their use. (If you don't use standardized tests for attributes that are commonly or easily measured by tests, please explain why.)
   - If you propose developing a non-standardized assessment tool (e.g., a work sample test), be explicit about what it would include. You don't need to actually develop the tool if it is complex, but you should provide the client firm with sufficiently detailed information that they would be able to develop it themselves.
   - A decision guide for making hiring decisions. This should be sufficiently complete that the organization would know how to use it. This is where you can add value by making the decision process easy to use, which I will definitely consider in grading.

Sample papers from past classes are available for download on the course web site (http://leeds-faculty.colorado.edu/Rosse/Courses/4020/Papers.htm). They can provide you with ideas about how other teams have structured their papers, and will also illustrate that a number of different formats are acceptable. Note, however, that some the requirements for this year differ from those in past years, so a paper that earned an "A" 5 years ago might not meet current requirements. So use the papers more for ideas about different ways to structure your report than as a checklist of what needs to be included. In general, thorough documentation, reliance on material in the book, and <u>going beyond the minimum</u> are common characteristics of "A" papers.

<u>What form should the report be in?</u>

You should prepare <u>3 copies</u> of your report:

1. One copy should be given to the client firm. You want this report to reflect the professionalism of your team (and of Leeds), so it should be bound and look sharp. Although I do not require this, I strongly recommend that you schedule an opportunity to present the report to your contact in the organization. This connotes to them the importance of your work, and is also great practice for you. (Who knows, it might even

lead to a job offer!)

2. One hard copy should be turned in to me. I will be providing lots of comments when I read it, so please make sure it will hold up to lots of use. At the very least this means stapling it; bound copies are even better. Do NOT use double-sided copying and do not laminate the pages, as this makes them hard to write on. I will return this copy with my comments and grade no later than the day of the final exam. Include a copy of the cover letter that you sent to the firm when you sent them their report.
3. A third copy should be turned in via Dropbox on D2L. I will archive this copy so that I have something to refer to if the client company should call me to ask questions about your recommendations. Please try to combine all your sections into one file (rather than, for example, having separate Word and Excel files for the cover page, body of the report, appendices, etc.)

What's due when?

9/20	Project Plan due. A hard copy is attached, but I prefer that you complete the downloadable form from the course web site.
10/9	First draft of job description and performance attributes
10/23	5 copies of your job description & 1 copy of performance attributes (revised)
10/30	Structured interview protocol for mock interviews (attendance mandatory)
11/8	Oral status report in class by team leader (1 – 2 minutes)
12/6	Final report due at the beginning of class. **Reports turned in more than 5 minutes after the beginning of class will have points deducted**, at the rate of 10% per day or fraction thereof.

Managing your relationship with the client organization

- Approach the organization with professional attitudes and behavior. On the line is not only your own reputation, but that of CU-Boulder (and by inference the quality of our "brand").
- Create—and meet—commitments. Time is extremely valuable to managers, so if you don't show up for a meeting, or are late or disorganized, this creates ill-will. If you need to reschedule a meeting or interview, be sure to let them know as early as possible. Don't expect them to be able to re-arrange their schedule to meet your last-minute emergencies.
- Be responsibly discreet in handling the information you gather. Check with the organization about their desire for anonymity; if requested, avoid reference to the organization's identity. (This is very rare; if it comes up, talk with me in advance.) In all cases, promise and respect confidentiality of what you learn from SMEs.
- **You are required to give the organization a copy of your report.** The organization has provided you with a valuable resource (time and access to employees), and you should make sure that you provide them with something of value in return. Your report should be written so that the organization could put your recommendations into practice if they wished. The report for them can usually be the same as the one turned in to me, but it's okay if you prefer to give them an edited version (for example, to protect confidentialities, or to provide a somewhat less "academic" version). You should include a cover letter that clearly describes your credentials and the situation (i.e., a class assignment) in which your work was performed. **Please turn in a copy of this cover letter along with your project paper.**

Managing your relationships with each other

Doing this project as a team offers many advantages, but only if you work together as a team effectively. You learned a lot about managing teams in MGMT 3030, but here is a quick summary of things to keep in mind:

- Have an effective team leader. This person should not be doing all the work, but should keep the group focused and integrated. This is a "make or break issue" for a successful project. If it's not working out, it is acceptable to change leaders. There is no penalty for doing so, but please let me know so that I can keep my records straight.
- Have a plan! Develop a detailed list of tasks with deadlines, and monitor your progress. You're required to turn in a plan early in the semester, but for it to really be effective, you should review and update it regularly. Trust me—this will make your life considerably easier.
- Divide up the work. Figure out who is best at what, and then assign people according to their strengths and preferences. For example, is someone interested in employment testing and good at doing library research—that would be the person to assign to write the "testing" part of the selection system. Does someone have good editing skills—he or she could be charged with assembling the final report. Someone with good "people skills" might have the role of liaison with the company you're working with.
- Make sure everyone has an equitable share of the work. Double-check occasionally to verify that no one feels either left out or overworked. This is the most common reason for ill-will when peer evaluations are done.
- Schedule periodic meetings to review progress. Everyone needs to be flexible about times for these meetings, even if it means canceling skiing plans with your oldest friend! Be sure no one feels unable to attend these meetings, and be sure to let the group know as far in advance as possible if you are unable to make a scheduled meeting. This is another common reason for low peer evaluations.
- Speak up if you don't like the way things are going. It may be unpleasant, but things will only get worse if you wait. And remember that no one likes whiners; come with a suggested way to do things better rather than just a complaint.
- Resist the temptation to wait until the last minute!! Plan to have the paper done at least two days before the deadline. This allows for unexpected problems, and also gives time for everyone to review the final product. (**I'll nearly guarantee that this alone will improve your grade, often substantially**.)
- Talk with each other. Don't make "deals" when some members are absent. Don't "cut" people's work without talking to them. Last-minute editing by just one or two people almost guarantees hurt feelings.
- Do what you've promised to do, on time, and to the best of your ability. Turning your material in late, or doing it poorly, makes more work for others, creates conflicts, and leads to low peer evaluations. And don't be upset if you get feedback (hopefully constructive!) from your teammates about how to do, or rewrite, your section. You're all in this together with one goal: to turn in a project that your organization contact and I will say "Wow" when we read it.

Additional Reference Sources

You will likely find it useful to obtain additional information about conducting job analyses. An excellent reference source is Gatewood and Field's Human Resource Selection (see below). I've also listed other reference sources you may find valuable.

General:

Gatewood, R. D. & Field, H.S. (2001). *Human Resource Selection*. Fort Worth: Harcourt.

Heneman, H., Heneman R. & Judge, T. (2003). *Staffing Organizations*. Middleton, WI: Mendota House/Irwin.

Job Analysis:

Bemis, S., Belenky, A. & Soder, D. (1983) Job Analysis: An Effective Management Tool. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs.

Gael, S. (Editor). 1988. The Job Analysis Handbook for Business, Industry, and Government. New York: Wiley.

Ghorpade, J. (1988). Job Analysis: A Handbook for the Human Resources Director. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

McCormick, E. (1979) Job Analysis: Methods and Applications. NY: AMACOM.

Wright, P. & Wexley, K. (1985). How to choose the kind of job analysis you really need. Personnel, May, 51-55.

Employment Tests

I have extensive resources on the course website to help you identify what employment tests may be useful; be sure to check and use them.

MGMT 4020
Selection System Project Evaluation Form

***Team:* _______ *Job:* ____**

1. Description of Job Analysis Procedure (10 pts)

- Certainty- or Uncertainty-based?
- Describe/<u>defend</u> choice/combination of procedures
- Describe limitations
- Provide <u>documentation</u> of information learned

A: 9 - 10
B: 6 - 7 - 8
C: 4 - 5
D: 2 - 3
F: 1

2. Job Description (5 pts)

- DOT or O*Net description included?

A: 4 -5
B: 3
C: 2
D: 1
F: 0

3. Critical Selection Attributes (10 pts)

- Describe rationale
- Demonstrate awareness of human abilities
- Include Fit and Risk Factors?

A: 9 - 10
B: 6 - 7 - 8
C: 4 - 5
D: 2 - 3
F: 1

4. Proposed Selection System (20 pts)

- Performance Attributes Matrix
- Listing of specific test(s) *and rationale*
- Recommendations re: application form
- Interview protocol
- Work sample
- Reference check
- Decision guide

A: 17 – 18 – 19 - 20
B: 13 – 14 – 15 - 16
C: 9 – 10 - 11 - 12
D: 5 - 6 - 7 - 8
F: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

5. Overall Professionalism (5 pts)

- Understandable to client organization
- Proper grammar, spelling, style
- Cover letter to firm included?

A: 4 -5
B: 3
C: 2
D: 1
F: 0

Total ______/50

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Project Planning Form

Team: _____ Leader: ___________________________________

Members:

Position: ____

Contact Person: ____

Organization: ____

Address: ____

____

____

Phone: ____

On a separate page, please provide a listing of:

- The key tasks you anticipate conducting
- Who is responsible for each task
- Your timeline for completing each task