

Hiring for the organization, not the job

David E. Bowen, Arizona State University-West
Gerald E. Ledford, Jr., University of Southern California
Barry R. Nathan, Southern California Gas Company

Executive Overview

This article examines a new approach to selection in which employees are hired to fit the characteristics of an organization, not just the requirements of a particular job. Diverse firms—high and low-tech, U.S. and Japanese-owned—are using the approach to build cultures that rely heavily on self-motivated, committed people for corporate success. New, often expensive, hiring practices are changing the traditional selection model. An organizational analysis supplements a job analysis, and personality attributes are screened in addition to skills, knowledge, and abilities. We outline the basic steps of the new selection model and present a case description of a manufacturing company that used the model in hiring employees to work in its high-involvement organization. The new model works to its fullest advantage in organizations that allow employees enough freedom to use their unique attributes to influence job performance.

Article

Conventional selection practices are geared toward hiring employees whose knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) provide the greatest fit with clearly defined requirements of specific jobs. Traditional selection techniques rarely consider characteristics of the organization in which the jobs reside. Traditional techniques also ignore characteristics of the person that are irrelevant to immediate job requirements. In common management parlance, the organization hires new "hands" or new "heads"—that is, parts of people.

A new model of selection is emerging, however, that is geared toward hiring a "whole" person who will fit well into the specific organization's culture. It reflects a fundamental reorientation of the selection process toward hiring "people," not just KSAs, for "organizations," not just jobs. This leads to hiring practices that seem peculiar, and needlessly extravagant, from a traditional human resource standpoint. Consider the hiring practices of three different organizations.

* AFG Industries builds two new float glass plants. The plants use practices such as work teams, extensive training, and skill-based pay that create a high level of employee involvement. The hiring process for factory workers includes screening formal resumes (not job applications), personality testing, pre-employment training that simulates some plant jobs, interviews with panels of managers and/or employees, and a medical exam.

* Sun Microsystems is the fastest-growing U.S. company in the past five years, with annual growth averaging more than 100 percent.¹ Filling open jobs is critical to Sun's effectiveness, phenomenal growth, and profitability. Yet, the hiring process is extremely time-consuming and labor-intensive. Potential hires at all levels are brought into the organization from four to seven times for interviews with up to twenty interviewers. The process is full of ambiguity, lacks formal rules, and demands that all employees engage in problem solving to get themselves hired.

* Toyota (USA) screens 50,000 applications for 3,000 factory jobs in the initial staffing of its plant in Georgetown, Kentucky.² Each employee hired invests at least eighteen hours in a selection process that includes a general knowledge exam, a test of attitudes toward work, an interpersonal skills assessment center, a manufacturing exercise designed to provide a realistic job preview of assembly work, an extensive personal interview, and a physical exam.

A basic assumption of bureaucratic organizations is that individuals cannot be trusted to manage their own behavior. Thus, management designs the organization to control employee behavior as tightly as possible, through the managerial hierarchy, impersonal rules and procedures, close supervision, and extensive socialization and training.

As we shall see, these organizations adopt unusual hiring practices to find employees who fit the organization and to encourage those who do not fit to seek employment elsewhere. Although potential hires with skills that meet the demands of specific jobs are not ignored, these companies maintain that the person-job fit needs to be supported and enriched by person-organization fit. These companies are willing to invest substantial resources in rigorously assessing this fit. Why and how organizations approach hiring in this way are explored in this article.

How Important are Hiring Decisions, Really? The Person-Situation Controversy Revisited

Is individual behavior, such as job performance, a function of the person (attributes of an employee), the situation (characteristics of the work setting), or the interaction of the person and situation? This question is age-old. Proponents of employee selection as a key to human resource effectiveness answer that individual behavior is largely a function of the person. Selection techniques attempt to capitalize on enduring differences between individuals by choosing those individuals who are best suited to the job. Conversely, advocates of socialization and training practices that attempt to mold employees after they are hired assume that the situation is the principal determinant of individual behavior.³ The majority of researchers and managers subscribe to some form of the interactionist perspective. They assume that both the person and the situation matter, and that the combination of the two determines individual performance and other behaviors.

We argue that both researchers and managers have overemphasized the situation and have paid only lip service to the individual in recent years. In research on organizational behavior, people variables (for example, needs) usually are treated as secondary to situational variables (for example, job designs) and researchers generally are skeptical about the ability of personality variables to predict job performance.⁴ Managerial interest in individual testing appears to have dropped sharply after several 1970 court decisions held that unvalidated and discriminatory selection procedures were illegal.

An overemphasis on the importance of the situation fits the managerial ideology dominant among American corporations. A basic assumption of bureaucratic organizations is that individuals cannot be trusted to manage their own behavior. Thus, management designs the organization to control employee behavior as tightly as possible, through the managerial hierarchy, impersonal rules and procedures, close supervision, and extensive socialization and training. This curtails the expression of individual differences in behavior. As a result, the organization is designed to be what researchers have called a "strong situation," one in which the intensity of the situation suppresses variation in behavior that is attributable to the person.⁵ Thus, managers create a self-fulfilling prophecy. The belief that the situation is the most important predictor of behavior leads to the organizational design which suppresses individual differences. This self-fulfilling pattern is further reinforced by basing hiring decisions on a single, brief interview, which has proved to be unreliable and of poor validity.⁶ It is not surprising, then, that managers often conclude that the selection system is not a key success factor.

Yet, some organizations are designed as "weak situations," allowing a range of employee responses to work requirements.⁷ These organizations have less control

over individuals and the effects of person variables are greater. In such organizations, it is more important than in traditional organizations to do a good job of hiring the right people.

Consider the three organizations we described at the beginning of this article. They are more different than similar. They include high-tech and moderately low-tech, manufacturing-driven and engineering-driven, white collar and blue collar, and U.S.-owned and Japanese-owned firms. Yet these organizations share a set of management assumptions about organizational success. Each is attempting to build a distinctive culture that is intentionally "fragile," meaning that management relies heavily on self-motivated, committed people for system effectiveness.⁸ While all three organizations have a management hierarchy, organizational policies, and other tools of external control, all rely to an unusual degree on employees to make the system work effectively. And they use sophisticated selection systems to hire the whole person whose skills and personality fit the type of organization, not just a job.

The New Selection Model: Hiring for Person-Organization Fit

Exhibit 1 presents the new selection model for hiring for person-organization fit. As we shall see, it differs from the traditional selection model in several important ways.⁹ Our model represents a synthesis of the steps taken by the organizations mentioned in our opening case examples as well as by other progressive firms. Although any one firm may not fully implement every step, all of these steps together offer the best guarantee of person-organization fit.

We will describe the steps in the model and then present a case description of a firm where hiring practices are a close match to the ideal. First, however, we clarify the meaning of "person-organization fit."

Person-Organization Fit

The model in Exhibit 1 places the selection process in the context of a rich interaction between the person and the organization, both of which are more broadly defined and assessed than in the traditional selection model.

1. ASSESS THE OVERALL WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Job Analysis
- Organizational Analysis



2. INFER THE TYPE OF PERSON REQUIRED

- Technical Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
- Social skills
- Personal Needs, Values, and Interests
- Personality Traits



3. DESIGN "RITES OF PASSAGE" FOR ORGANIZATION ENTRY THAT ALLOW BOTH THE ORGANIZATION AND THE APPLICANT TO ASSESS THEIR FIT

- Tests of Cognitive, Motor, and Interpersonal Abilities
- Interviews by Potential Co-Workers and Others
- Personality Tests
- Realistic Job Previews, Including Work Samples



4. REINFORCE PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AT WORK

- Reinforce Skills and Knowledge Through Task Design and Training
- Reinforce Personal Orientation Through Organization Design

Exhibit 1. A Hiring Process for Person-Organization Fit

Person-organization fit requires that two types of fit be achieved in the hiring process: (1) between the KSAs of the individual and the task demands or critical requirements for the job; and (2) between the overall personality of the individual (e.g. needs, interests, and values) and the climate or culture of the organization.

The traditional selection model focuses almost exclusively on the first type of fit (KSAs—job) while tending to ignore, or assessing far less rigorously, the second type (personality—climate/culture).¹⁰ The narrow focus of the traditional selection model reflects several factors. One is that managers tend to think of individual job performance as the key outcome of the hiring process and they believe that job performance is a function of the fit between KSAs and task demands. Additionally, the traditional selection model is more concerned with finding new employees than with retaining them. There is less attention to whether the whole person finds the organization's culture satisfying enough to stay. Organizations have also been constrained by the unavailability of proven selection technologies for producing the fit between personality and climate/culture. This situation can be improved, we believe, by following the steps for hiring that are described next.

Step One: Assess The Work Environment

The job analysis of the traditional model of selection is also conducted in the new model. It remains instrumental in achieving the fit between individual KSAs and task demands. Alternative job analysis techniques include the position analysis questionnaire, task inventories, and critical incident techniques.¹¹

While many job analyses include evaluations of the work context, the person-organization fit model explicitly recognizes that successful employees have knowledge, skills, abilities, and other personal characteristics that match both the content and the context of the job.

The purpose of an organizational analysis is to define and assess the work environment in terms of the characteristics of the organization, rather than just in terms of the characteristics of a specific job. It identifies the behaviors and responsibilities that lead to organizational effectiveness, and implies the personal characteristics most likely to be associated with such behaviors and responsibilities. Organizational analysis also is important because job analysis data may quickly become outdated as rapidly changing products and technologies reshape employees' jobs. The organization's overall philosophy and values are likely to be more stable and consequently, the more important long-term focus for fit.

Techniques for organizational analysis are not well-established, largely because there is little research that systematically associates the characteristics of organizations and individual behavior patterns. Managers need to identify the important dimensions of the organization and their implications for the kinds of employees who would best fit those situations. Although organizational analysis techniques are not nearly as well-developed as job analysis techniques, a variety of methods are available. For example, the training field offers guidelines for conducting an organizational analysis as one component of a training needs analysis. Organization characteristics assessed include short- and long-term goals, staffing needs, properties of the environment (for example, stability), and employee perceptions of organization climate. Organizational culture audits have emerged in the last decade that offer both qualitative and quantitative methods for describing an organization's norms and values.¹² Quite promising is a sophisticated Q-sort methodology that assesses the content, integrity, and crystallization of organizational values and matches them with an assessment of individual values.¹³ Finally, there is a long-standing approach to diagnosing the characteristics of an organization's four subsystems (individuals, tasks, organizational arrangements, informal organization) that can yield organizational analysis data.¹⁴

Organization analysis does not replace job analysis. Rather it ensures that important components of the work context as well as its content are identified and evaluated for their importance to job success. While many job analyses include

evaluations of the work context, the person–organization fit model explicitly recognizes that successful employees have knowledge, skills, abilities, and other personal characteristics that match both the *content* and the *context* of the job.

Step Two: Infer the Type of Person Required

In step two, managers deal with applicants in terms of who they are, not just what they can do. It is still necessary to infer from the job analysis the KSAs that employees need to be technically competent. However, step two also requires inferring, from the organizational analysis, the needs, values and interests—that is, the personality—an employee must possess to be an effective member of the organization. For example, if the organizational analysis reveals that teamwork is a key norm or value in the setting, then selection tools must be used to find people who are team players. Furthermore, social and interpersonal skills will be necessary, in addition to the cognitive and motor abilities that are the dominant skills-focus of the traditional selection model.

First, the use of multiple screening methods, raters, and criteria has long been recommended by researchers as the best approach to hiring.¹⁹ Yet most organizations still hire employees using a single interview with a single interviewer.

The move by some organizations toward hiring the total person coincides with a renewed interest by researchers in personality as a predictor of job attitudes and behaviors. These researchers believe that studies in which personality measures fail to predict job performance often have been plagued by problems such as focusing on personality aspects of questionable relevance to the job, poor research methods, and so on.¹⁵ These problems have given personality a bad name and fostered the impression that the situation matters much more than the person in influencing job attitudes and performance. In contrast, more recent research has yielded such interesting findings that individual personality attributes can predict job satisfaction later—more than fifty years and even for different jobs. The research implies that job satisfaction may be associated with a stable, enduring personality attribute rather than a function of the situation.¹⁶ This indicates that the types of people hired is very important.

Organizations also must pay attention to technical skills needed by the organization. Often applicants with the most appropriate personalities and social skills are not those with the right technical skills. If the organization faces the need to upgrade technical skills quickly, it may be forced to make tradeoffs. Organizations in this situation often place greater weight on personality and social skills, on the grounds that it is easier to train technical skills than change personalities or develop social skills. This can lead to increased short-term training costs and temporary overstaffing. However, if the work technology is complex and training times are long, management may be forced to hire some employees who better fit the organization's technical requirements than its cultural requirements. Douglas Bray, noted pioneer of the AT&T Management Progress Study, considers this tradeoff and suggests that selection decisions about needs, values, and interests may be more critical than those for skills.¹⁷ For example, a desire to learn new jobs is an attribute that cannot be taught easily to employees, as job skills can. You either hire people who have this attribute, or do without.

Step Three: Design "Rites of Passage" That Allow the Organization and the Individual to Assess Fit

The battery of screens used in the new approach to hiring may seem designed to discourage individuals from taking the job.¹⁸ Yet, these screens have several purposes. First, the use of multiple screening methods, raters, and criteria has long been recommended by researchers as the best approach to hiring.¹⁹ Yet most organizations still hire employees using a single interview with a single interviewer. More sophisticated techniques, if used, typically are reserved for executives and sometimes sales people. Second, multiple screenings not only allow the organization to select employees, but also provides applicants with sufficient realistic information about the work environment so that they can make an informed choice about whether they even want the job. Third, the people who

join the organization feel special. They have survived the elaborate rites of passage necessary to join the organization. They experience the sense of accomplishment associated with completing boot camp when entering military service.

A recent *Fortune* article described these fresh approaches as "The New Art of Hiring Smart."²⁰ One ingredient has been increased use of job simulation exercises for assembly workers. These simulations, or work sample tests, help both the person and the organization assess fit. The applicant receives a realistic job preview of the work. The organization has an opportunity to assess applicants' technical skills and, when group interaction is required in an exercise, their interpersonal skills as well. Intelligence tests also seem to be on the rebound.

Sun Microsystems offers a good example of the use of rites of passage to allow mutual assessment of fit. This fast-growing Silicon Valley firm, like many high-technology companies, is constantly changing in response to rapidly developing markets, evolving technologies, and the pace of internal growth. Employees who prefer clear job descriptions, stability, a leisurely pace, and predictability would be unhappy at Sun. The hiring process is such a challenge, and so full of ambiguity, that unsuitable applicants tend to give up before the process is completed. Those hired have survived multiple interviews with many different possible co-workers. A joke at Sun is, "after seven sets of interviews, we put applicants on the payroll whether they've been hired or not." The hiring process thus introduces prospective employees to the culture of the organization.

Personality tests are another way to assess mutual fit. It appears that "personality tests are back."²¹ For example, the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator is used by companies such as Allied Signal, Apple, AT&T, Citicorp, Exxon, G.E., Honeywell, and 3M. These tests are used primarily in management development programs. However, personality tests are used increasingly as selection tests, particularly for assembly worker positions.

There is renewed interest in personality tests even though past efforts to validate them have been largely unsuccessful.²² However, there is a growing belief that personality tests can be validated under the proper conditions.²³ These include:

1. Using personality measures that are tailored to the work setting. Major personality tests were not developed for work settings, so their poor track record in validation studies is not surprising.
2. Using personality measures to predict global criteria. That is, multi-faceted measures of job attitudes and behaviors, rather than one specific criterion such as quarterly sales.
3. Using measures of personality dimensions that are logically or theoretically associated with the work in the organization. This contrasts with screening for personality attributes that are not job related but hold some particular interest to managers.

Whereas personality tests provide organizations with information about applicants, realistic job previews (RJPs) provide applicants with information about organizations. Examples of RJPs are the Toyota USA job simulations/work sample tests that show applicants the repetitive nature of manufacturing work and the requirements for teamwork. Applicants can then make informed choices about whether they would be satisfied there. "Turned-off" applicants may drop out of the hiring process. Those hired are more likely to join the organization with a sense of commitment and realistic expectations. Fundamentally, an RJP helps individuals

decide if they want to join an organization, based on their own assessment of their personality and how it might fit with a particular type of organization.²⁴

Step Four: Reinforce Person-Organization Fit at Work

Selection is clearly the first and, arguably, the most important step in implementing a fragile system philosophy. However, the hiring process must be integrated with, and supported by, the firm's other human resource management practices. Japanese-owned plants in the U.S. and high involvement organizations illustrate this point.

Japanese automobile manufacturers operating in the United States provide examples of how to accomplish this. The Japanese "Auto Alley" in the U.S. provided more than 6,000 assembly jobs in 1989. Key operations include Nissan in Smyrna, Tennessee; Toyota in Georgetown, Kentucky; Honda in Marysville, Ohio; Mazda in Flat Rock, Michigan; and Diamond-Star Motors Corporation in Normal, Illinois.²⁵ The Japanese have attempted to create a certain type of organization, characterized by now-familiar values of teamwork, consensual decision-making, peer control, egalitarianism, and non-specialized career paths. Broad job classifications encourage employee flexibility, rather than identification with specific jobs. Extensive on-the-job training and job rotation further increase flexibility. Group activities encourage employees to contribute ideas for organizational improvement and promote teamwork. Employment stability helps the organization realize a return on its training and other investments in human resources, and increases employee loyalty to the organization. Thus, a selection system in such organizations typically screens for interest in work variety, social needs and skills, and organization commitment.

High involvement organizations (HIOs) are another class of organization that uses multiple systems to support hiring for person-organization fit. HIOs are a relatively new organizational form; there are perhaps a few hundred examples now existing in the U.S.²⁶ HIO's have two key characteristics.²⁷ First, the organization is designed to create very high levels of employee involvement. Power, information, skills, and rewards for performance are pushed down to the lowest levels of the organization. Self-managed teams or other structures enable employees to share decision-making power. Extensive training in technical, social, and business skills provides team members with the skills needed for effective self-management. Information systems communicate the performance data that teams need to manage themselves. Reward systems such as skill-based pay and gainsharing motivate needed behaviors, such as learning and problem solving. For obvious reasons, hiring practices in HIOs typically attempt to select employees who prefer working in groups and who have high needs for personal growth and development. Thus, the hiring process is one design element of many that must fit with the overall design.

The following case description of the hiring process in a new HIO illustrates all four steps of the new selection model.

Hiring for Person-Organization Fit: The Case of a Start-up High Involvement Organization

The research reported here was conducted as part of an action research project at a new float glass plant in the western United States.²⁸ The plant is a classic new HIO. Research on the selection system described here is part of a larger, on-going action research effort. Management was interested in developing selection procedures and tools for hiring employees with the necessary job skills, needs, and aspirations to fit the organization design. Researchers helped design the hiring process, conducted extensive research on the initial hiring process at the plant, and explored the validity of personality measures as possible future selection tools. The overall effort essentially followed the four steps previously discussed for hiring for person-organization fit.

Step One: Assess the Work Environment

Since the plant was a start-up operation, there were no existing jobs to analyze in this initial step. There were individual jobs with comparable content at other organizational sites, but management was committed to designing the new plant as the first high involvement organization in the company. Thus, analyzing the work environment of the existing plants would have been of limited use in designing a hiring process to match the new HIO. Instead, top management and two of the researcher/consultants (the second author and Tom Cummings of the University of Southern California) conducted an organizational analysis to assess key desired organizational characteristics, norms, and values. This analysis followed standard sociotechnical systems procedures, and specifically considered requirements for the level of employee growth and social needs. This led to the development of the management philosophy and practices that would define the new organization. A customized version of the HIO concept, tailored to the needs of the organization, emerged from this work.

Glass-making lent itself to an HIO design for several reasons. First, there was a great deal of task interdependence which required worker cooperation and teamwork. Second, technical uncertainty was high. Workers were responsible for making immediate decisions about the glass-making process from the procurement to furnace melting of raw materials and various stages of cooling, inspecting, cutting, packing, and storing. The plant's profitability is directly related to production efficiency and glass quality. Quality is directly dependent on workers' ability to maintain a continual, steady flow of glass, by constantly monitoring and regulating the temperature and speed of flow of the product through the system. Deviations from desired parameters must be corrected as soon as possible after detection. Internal control by employees is more responsive to system fluctuations than external control through supervision, rules, and procedures.

This work environment led management to adopt a work design that encouraged high levels of employee teamwork and decision making. Employees were organized into self-regulating work teams at each sequential stage of production. Management saw this job design as most appropriate for the relatively high task interdependence and task uncertainty of the plant technology. Management expected that as team members developed technical and social skills, they would make joint decisions about work methods and assignments and solve production problems on the line.

Step Two: Infer The Type of Person Required

Since work in the high involvement glass plant required understanding and becoming involved in the entire production process, selecting on the basis of technical skills was not enough. Basic KSAs, such as motor and arithmetic skills, while necessary, would not be sufficient for organizational success. Workers also had to feel a sense of commitment to working in this type of organization. Furthermore, the jobs were to be dynamic. Over time, employees were expected to learn different skills within their team and in other teams, and to take on an increasing share of decision making. Top management expected that the number of supervisors and layers of management would be reduced as the teams matured. A fit between applicant characteristics and the work requirements of a high involvement organization as a whole was required.

In addition to the necessary technical skills, two personality characteristics were especially important to the organization. One was growth need strength. The HIO design placed many demands on employees for continuous learning, decision making, and assuming responsibility for organizational structuring, functioning, and performance. For example, employees were required to train each other, give feedback to fellow team members on their performance, and help design

organizational changes. Applicants who desired little challenge or learning opportunity and those who prefer narrowly defined jobs would have been misfits with this organization. Conversely, those who valued or had strong needs for personal growth, accomplishment, and personal development would be more committed to working in the new plant.

A second relevant personality characteristic was social needs. This was obvious because self-regulating teams demand cooperation and teamwork. In addition, management planned to make heavy use of special problem-solving groups, committees, and task forces. Those who saw working with others as a burden would have been misfits in such a setting, while people with high social needs were expected to prefer group forms of work and group activities.

Step Three: Design "Rites of Passage" That Allow the Organization and the Individual to Assess Fit

Participants were given a realistic portrayal of what it would be like to work in a team-based, high involvement structure, including the kinds of work behaviors that would be expected.

The hiring process consisted of several stages that involved multiple methods, raters, and criteria. A state agency conducted an initial screen of approximately 1000 candidates responding to local advertisements about job openings at the plant, which was then under construction. At this stage applicants received scores for their education and experience, such as a high school degree or GED, manufacturing or related experience, and ability to understand process instrumentation and complete a time card. In addition, tests using potential predictors based on personality and other survey questions also were administered at this time. Personality characteristics were assessed using the Personality Research Form—Form E, or PRF, a highly regarded personality assessment instrument.²⁹ The PRF measure of affiliation needs is very similar to social needs as described previously. Three PRF measures were relevant to growth needs: achievement, endurance, and dominance. (The dominance items measure desire to influence others or social achievement, not oppressiveness.) These two personality dimensions, affiliation and growth needs, were logically associated with the nature of work in an HIO and the PRF measures were moderately tailored to better fit the work setting. Of the 540 applicants who passed the initial screening and were invited to a pre-employment assessment and training program (described below), approximately 500 candidates responded.

Performance was assessed in four half-day sessions of a pre-employment assessment and training program, designed to capture characteristics of work in a high involvement float glass factory. The company used this program both as a selection tool and as a realistic job preview. As an RJP, the program showed how a high involvement organization is designed to operate, technical and social requirements, what it would be like to handle glass (for example, lacerations are common and special protective clothing is used to minimize the likelihood of injury), and various tasks employees would be expected to perform.

The program was divided into two approximately equal segments. One part involved work simulations consisting of handling and packing glass and operating hand tools and equipment required for glass making. Participants were given instructions about work methods, rules, and safety procedures, and engaged in glass making and packing tasks as a team. The second part of the training program involved classroom learning and experiential exercises aimed at group decision making. Almost half of the classroom time was used to present information about glass making and the design features of the high involvement plant, including self-regulating groups, participative leadership, egalitarian human-resource practices, skill-based pay, and gainsharing. Participants were given a realistic portrayal of what it would be like to work in a team-based, high involvement structure, including the kinds of work behaviors that would be expected. They also were tested on basic math and measurement skills needed to perform glass making and packaging tasks, as well as given homework covering

basic processes and terminology used in making glass as well as the nature of one's work and responsibility in a high involvement organization.

For more than half of the classroom time, participants engaged in exercises designed to simulate the kind of group interaction and decision-making occurring in self-regulating groups. One exercise, for example, involved reaching a group consensus about the ranking of items needed to survive in the rugged outdoors. Another exercise involved role playing a group decision about which department should receive a new piece of equipment. These exercises were followed by extensive debriefing about members' behaviors and interactions and how the learning applies to the work of teams in the plant.

The scoring procedure evaluated applicants from a holistic perspective, that is how well each applicant fit in a high involvement setting rather than how he or she performed on individual job-related tasks. Applicants were evaluated by managers and supervisors who had received training on how to avoid common rater errors. Classroom activities, group exercises, and work simulations were scored. Applicants were evaluated on the quality and thoroughness of homework assignments and were required to attain minimum passing scores on arithmetic and tape measure reading tests. Group exercises were scored on the degree applicants exhibited participating, negotiating, gatekeeping, and probing behaviors. Finally, work simulations were scored on four factors: absence and tardiness over the four days; safety behavior; responsibility, meaning following instructions and not exhibiting disruptive or distracting behavior; and general behavior, meaning exhibiting team skills, paying attention to instructors, and not breaking plant rules or abusing equipment. Thus, the work simulations were not scored on task performance per se. Instead, they were scored on behaviors relevant to the overall success of the organization. This focus on behaviors ensured that the selection process could be defended legally, if necessary, on the basis of content validity.

The pre-employment assessment and training program met two important goals. First, it was consistent with technical and professional standards for employment selection. As in assessment centers, job behaviors were sampled systematically across different situations. Multiple and diverse activities and assessment methods afforded evaluators an opportunity to assess how well applicants would fit into an HIO generally, rather than just on how well applicants could perform specific tasks. The use of global criteria satisfied another condition for successfully validating a personality test as selection tools. Second, the program gave applicants a realistic job preview of what working in a high involvement glass plant would be like. The task activities provided applicants with a preview of the physical and potentially dangerous nature of the work. (One of the authors was present when a piece of tempered glass was mishandled and literally exploded in an applicant's hands.) The classroom activities prepared applicants for the organization's emphasis on working together and taking responsibility for action.

Those who passed this program were invited to a final selection interview with a panel of managers. This structured interview consisted of questions regarding manufacturing experience, education, understanding the high involvement and autonomous work group design, past experience and interest in group activities, and other performance skills and creative experiences. Finally, applicants were required to pass a physical examination including a drug screen. Ultimately, 250 applicants of the original 1000 applicants successfully completed these phases and the physical examination.

We subsequently validated the PRF personality test. Specifically, scores on the PRF were significantly correlated with performance in the pre-employment

training program and with applicants anticipated satisfaction with work in the organization.³⁰ This means that it would be appropriate and legal for the company to use measures of social and growth needs from this test in future hiring decisions. Since the analysis was completed long after most employees had been hired at the site, however, the company did not use the test in hiring decisions.

Step Four: Reinforce Person-Organization Fit at Work

The objectives of the hiring process were reinforced by various organization design features that emphasized high involvement and team functioning. For example, extensive training was provided, both in technical skills and in social skills such as group decision making. A skill-based pay system gave employees increases in base pay for learning new jobs within their team. This in turn reinforced employees' interest in receiving training, which enabled them to earn pay increases. The plant adopted a gainsharing plan from the beginning that provided generous plant-wide monetary bonuses when plant performance met specific objectives. This reinforced the need for teamwork, since no individual could win a bonus at the expense of another. The gainsharing plan also provided incentives for exemplary performance and for developing improvements in the production process that could result in greater payouts. Extensive business information was routinely shared with employees, in part to make the gainsharing plan work more effectively. Employees were also involved as needed in task forces of various kinds to solve business, personnel, and other problems. In short, there was extensive reinforcement for the behaviors and characteristics that management sought during the hiring process.

Extensive business information was routinely shared with employees, in part to make the gainsharing plan work more effectively. Employees were also involved as needed in task forces of various kinds to solve business, personnel, and other problems.

The results of the hiring process have been positive. A survey of employees after startup indicated that employee quality of work life, according to various measures of satisfaction, organization commitment, and so on, was very high—a likely indication of person-organization fit. After an initial period of high turnover, turnover has dropped below national norms. On most key performance measures, the plant is one of the most effective in the company. Its main rival is another new high involvement plant that opened shortly after startup of the plant described here; it was developed on the same HIO model and used a similar hiring process. On the whole, it appears that the plant has been a very effective organization and that hiring for the organization, not just the job, has contributed to that effectiveness.

Benefits and Problems from Hiring for Person-Organization Fit

Clearly, the new approach to hiring for person-organization fit requires more resources than the traditional selection model. Is it worth the cost? Consider the potential benefits (see Exhibit 2).

(1) **Employee Attitudes.** Researchers have long proposed that a fit between individual needs and organizational climates and cultures would result in greater job satisfaction and organization commitment.³¹ There is ample data documenting that the realistic job previews typically used in the new selection model are associated with higher on-the-job satisfaction.³² Greater team spirit also is likely when new employees have shared the experience of moving successfully through the demanding rites of passage that lead to organizational entry.

Surveys of applicants in our case example indicated that these favorable attitudes were associated with the hiring process. For example, the majority of applicants felt the pre-employment training program accurately measured how well they could do the job and get along with others, and was a help in subsequent performance on the job and interacting with co-workers. Applicants also felt it provided a realistic preview of working at the plant. An overwhelming seventy seven percent reported that after going through pre-employment training, the work seemed more satisfying than when they first applied for the job. Only two percent thought it would be less satisfying.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

1. MORE FAVORABLE EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES (SUCH AS GREATER JOB SATISFACTION, ORGANIZATION COMMITMENT, AND TEAM SPIRIT)
2. MORE DESIRABLE INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS (SUCH AS BETTER JOB PERFORMANCE AND LOWER ABSENTEEISM AND TURNOVER)
3. REINFORCEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN (SUCH AS SUPPORT FOR WORK DESIGN AND DESIRED ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE)

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

1. GREATER INVESTMENT OF RESOURCES IN THE HIRING PROCESS
2. RELATIVELY UNDEVELOPED AND UNPROVEN SUPPORTING SELECTION TECHNOLOGY
3. INDIVIDUAL STRESS
4. MAY BE DIFFICULT TO USE THE FULL MODEL WHERE PAYOFFS ARE GREATEST
5. LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL ADAPTATION

Exhibit 2. Potential Benefits and Problems With Hiring For Person-Organization Fit

(2) Employee Behaviors. Studies indicate that high involvement organizations, which typically use the new selection model, have low rates of absenteeism, turnover, and grievances.³³ The data are even clearer that using realistic job previews in Step 3 is associated with lower turnover.³⁴ We also have presented a strong case that person-organization fit will result in employees displaying more of what have been labelled "organizational citizenship behaviors." These are behaviors that employees perform above and beyond explicit job requirements. The thinking here is that fitted employees see themselves as really belonging to the organization and willing to invest their own resources in its on-going maintenance.³⁵

(3) Reinforcement of Organization Design. The effectiveness of Japanese transplants that hire according to this model is common knowledge. HIOs often are very high performers. For example, a study of a large sample of high involvement organizations found that HIOs outperformed their industry on return on sales by an average of 532 percent and outperformed their industry on return on investment by an average of 388 percent.³⁶ Researchers often argue that the power of such an organization derives from the mutual reinforcement of its parts, including the selection process. The hiring process in HIOs helps select employees who are interested in challenging, responsible, varied jobs and pay systems that reward needed behaviors and performance.

Potential Problems

Hiring for person-organization fit may also have its disadvantages (see Exhibit 2):

(1) Greater Investment in Hiring. This model requires a much greater investment of resources in the hiring process. For example, Mazda in Flat Rock, Michigan spends about \$13,000 per employee to staff its plant.³⁷ It appears that organizations hiring within this model are spending the same time and money on hiring an assembly worker as they do in conducting an executive search.

The costs of making revisions in the hiring process also are different in the new model. A traditional hiring process needs to be revised whenever the requirements of the job change significantly. A hiring process for person-organization fit needs to be changed whenever the business, technological, or cultural requirements of the organization change significantly. This means that changes in hiring practices for person-organization fit are likely to be less frequent but much greater in scope than changes in traditional hiring

processes. A change in hiring practices for person-organization fit may well involve a change in how every new employee is hired.

(2) Undeveloped Selection Technology. The supporting selection technology is still relatively undeveloped and unproven. One problem is the still-thin track record of successfully validating personality tests against job performance. However, the present authors' study in which measures of growth needs and social needs predicted candidates' performance in a pre-employment simulation of high-involvement work demonstrates that personality measures, carefully chosen and developed, can be validated. Yet until personality tests acquire a deeper inventory of successful validation studies, organizations will doubt their usefulness.

In the context of person-organization fit, techniques for assessing people are more developed than those for assessing work environments. Even on the people side, though, the field is not nearly as sophisticated in measuring work-related personality facets as it is in assessing KSAs. Moreover, there is a great need for techniques of organizational analysis that are as sophisticated as those for job analysis (e.g., the PAQ). Overall, the challenge in organizational analysis is to: (a) identify relevant underlying dimensions of settings and how they can be measured, (b) determine the major impact on individual attitudes and behaviors, and organizational effectiveness, and (c) determine how such impacts differ depending upon individuals' personality.³⁸

In fact, there may be less adverse impact as a result of hiring for organization fit than in traditional hiring systems.

Managers may be concerned about the legality of these developing tools. More broadly, managers may be concerned about whether selecting for organization fit is legal. This concern is groundless, in our view. The legal standards for person-organization fit are no different than those for person-job fit. In general, selection procedures that do not result in adverse impact on protected minorities and women are not illegal. If the selection system does result in adverse impact, then evidence of job-relatedness must be presented. Job-relatedness is based on the content, construct, and criterion-related validity of the selection procedures. The procedures we have described establish job-relatedness.

In fact, there may be less adverse impact as a result of hiring for organization fit than in traditional hiring systems. Traditional systems rely mostly on tests of abilities to predict job performance. Intellectual ability tests typically result in adverse impact against minorities, and physical ability tests often result in adverse impact against women. Organization fit, in contrast, is based largely on values, needs, and motives that may be more evenly distributed in the population.

(3) Employee Stress. Individuals fitted to "fragile systems" may find their organizational lives to be more stressful. The firms in the Japanese Auto Alley, high-involvement organizations, firms in the Silicon Valley, and so on, which rely on carefully selected people for system effectiveness are also laying substantial claims to those people's lives. This higher level of involvement at work may be associated with experiencing more stress on the job. These workers have reported that they now take work problems home with them and feel the strains more typically associated with managerial roles.³⁹

(4) Difficult to Use the Full Model Where the Benefits are Greatest. A new hiring model may offer the greatest potential benefits to new organizations, such as new plants and startup companies. This is because hiring the right kinds of employees can help establish the desired culture of the organization from the very beginning. In existing organizations that are attempting to change their culture, there may be a long period in which the proportion of employees with unwanted attributes drops through attrition, while the proportion of employees with desired attributes gradually increases due to an improved hiring process.

Most of the hiring model we have described can be used in new organizations. However, one component of the model, specifically formal selection testing, often

cannot be used appropriately or legally early in the life of the organization because the tests have not yet been validated. By the time the validation studies have been conducted, most of the workforce will have been hired. In some circumstances, it may be possible to avoid this problem by validating the tests before hiring in the new organization. For example, many companies that develop one high involvement organization (or other unusual culture) go on to develop others. It may be possible to validate the tests in an existing location if the culture of the existing organization and that desired of the new location are similar. AFG Industries, for example, could use the PRF test to hire employees in other plants that are designed as high involvement organizations.

Another way to avoid this problem is taken by Development Dimensions International, a consulting firm that designed the hiring system for Toyota's Kentucky plant as well as other hiring systems aimed at person-organization fit.⁴⁰ DDI identifies the desired characteristics of new hires through a diagnosis conducted with senior managers of the organization. Potential hires explicitly are told about the desired characteristics during the orientation process. Then, the new hires complete a Job Fit Inventory, which includes items relevant to the desired qualities of employees in the organization. The instrument intentionally is very "transparent" and fakeable. Thus, it does not serve the same purposes as personality tests. Rather, it is used to screen out the bottom five to fifteen percent of applicants—those who admit they lack the attributes that they are told explicitly that the company is seeking.

(5) Lack of Organizational Adaptation. A problem could arise in hiring for the organization if it led to a workforce in which everyone had the same personality profile. The organization might become stagnant because everyone would share the same values, strengths, weaknesses, and blindspots. (Obviously, the issue is the same whether employees all tend to have the same point of view because of the selection system or because of training and socialization.) There has been considerable debate about whether a powerful organizational culture, whatever its source, leads to success or leads to dry rot and lack of innovativeness. There is some evidence, for example, indicating that organizations with little internal variability in employee perspectives perform better in the short run but worse in the long run, presumably as a result of inferior adaptation.⁴¹

However, we expect that significant internal variability will co-exist with person-organization fit. Even the best selection system is still imperfect; we do not succeed in hiring only the "right types." More fundamentally, the hiring process still results in variability on the desired characteristics. Even though all those hired may meet minimum standards, some will be higher than others on the desired characteristics. Finally, employees are not clones of one another just because they are similar on some personality dimensions. We would expect considerable variation on demographic, cultural, and personality dimensions that were not the basis for selection.

The Future of Hiring for Person-Organization Fit

What does the future hold for this more sophisticated and elaborate approach to employee selection? Will it be adopted by an increasingly large share of corporations?

We believe that hiring for the organization, not the job, will become the only effective selection model for the typical business environment. The defining attributes of this business environment—such as shortened product life cycles, increasingly sophisticated technologies, growing globalization of markets, shifting customer demands—make for very transitory requirements in specific employee jobs. Organizational success in this environment requires hiring employees who fit the overall organization, not those who fit a fixed set of task demands. Employee personalities must fit the management philosophy and values that help define the organization's uniqueness and its fitness for the future.

We also believe that senior managers must become more "person-oriented" in their own implicit resolution of the person-situation controversy if hiring for person-organization fit is to become a more common approach to selection. Again, generally speaking, managers tend to believe that tightly controlled situations are more effective in shaping employee performance than less-structured situations that allow the expression of individual differences. Managers who believe this are more inclined to spend resources on creating strong situations via job descriptions, close supervision, and so on than on sophisticated selection procedures.

Finally, we offer an important caveat to "person-oriented" managers who are committed to hiring for person-organization fit. They must manage a paradox. They must build strong organizational cultures yet, at the same time, design work situations that are weak enough to allow the unique qualities of individual employees to impact work performance. The key ingredient in balancing this paradox is to create a strong organizational culture with values that empower employees to apply their individual potentials to the conduct of their work. In this way, fragile systems release the employee energy necessary to compete in today's business environment.

Endnotes

¹ See William E. Sheeline, "Avoiding Growth's Perils," *Fortune*, August 13, 1990, 55.

² "Japan's Gung-Ho U.S. Car Plants," *Fortune*, January 30, 1989, 78-85.

³ For a review of the person-situation controversy, see Larry James and Terrence Mitchell (Eds) of several articles in a special forum, "Situational versus Dispositional Factors: Competing Explanations of Behavior," *Academy of Management Review*, 1989, 14. In particular, see Jennifer Chatman, "Improving Interactional Organizational Research" in that issue for implications of the controversy for selection and training.

⁴ See, for example, Terrence Mitchell "Organizational Behavior" in M.R. Rosenzweig and L.W. Porter, (Eds) *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol 30 (Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews 1979); Howard Weiss and Seymour Adler, "Personality and Organizational Behavior" in Barry Staw and Larry Cummings (Eds), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Vol 6 (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1984).

⁵ See, for example, Chatman, op cit., Weiss and Adler, op cit.

⁶ A number of research reviews have documented the low validity of the employment interview. For example, see R.D. Arvey and J.E. Campion, "The Employment Interview: A Summary and Review of Recent Research," *Personnel Psychology*, 1982, 35, 281-322. For an overview of higher validity coefficients reported for appropriately designed, or structured, interviews, see Neal Schmitt and I. Robertson, "Personnel Selection," in M.R. Rosenzweig and L.W. Porter (Eds), *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol 41 (Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews Inc., 1990).

⁷ See, for example, Chatman, op cit.; Weiss and Adler, op cit.

⁸ John P. MacDuffie, "The Japanese Auto Transplants: Challenges to Conventional Wisdom," *ILR Report*, Fall, 1988, 26 (1), 12-18; Huaru Shimada and John Paul MacDuffie, "Industrial Relations and 'Humanware,'" *Japanese Investments in Auto Manufacturing in*

the United States," Working Paper, Sloan School of Management, MIT, 1987.

⁹ For an overview of the steps in the classic selection model, see Benjamin Schneider and Neal Schmitt, *Staffing Organizations*, Second Edition (USA: Scott Foresman and Company, 1986). The goal of the traditional selection model is to produce a fit between the critical requirements of a particular job and the job-relevant KSAs of job applicants. This approach consists of three steps. First, a job analysis is conducted to determine the critical requirements of a particular job. Second, on the basis of the job analysis the analyst infers the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are needed for the job. Finally, selection tests are chosen or developed that are intended to indicate the degree to which job applicants possess the KSAs needed on the job. The tests are administered to all applicants. The tests are validated by collecting data on criteria measures, such as job performance, and then examining the correlation between applicant test scores and criteria measures. A statistically significant and reasonably high correlation indicates that the test is capable of discriminating appropriately between employees who do well and those who do poorly on the criteria measures.

¹⁰ See John P. Wanous, *Organizational Entry: Recruitment Selection, and Socialization of Newcomers*, (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1980) for a more complete discussion of these two types of fit and how both the organization and individual approach them.

¹¹ For more detail on job analysis techniques, see Schneider and Schmitt, op cit.

¹² Caren Siehl and Joanne Martin, "Measuring Organizational Culture: Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods," in M.O. Jones et al. (Eds) *Inside Organizations* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1988).

¹³ Chatman, op cit.

¹⁴ Michael Tushman and David Nadler, "A Diagnostic Model of Organizational Behavior."

¹⁵ As examples of this thinking, see Barry M. Staw, Nancy E. Bell, and John A. Clausen, "The Dispositional Approach to Job Attitudes: A Lifetime Longitudinal Test," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1986, 31, 56-77; Weiss and Adler, op cit.

¹⁶ Staw, et al., op cit.

¹⁷ "Doug Bray: You're Got to Pick Your Winners," *Training*, February, 1988, 79-81.

¹⁸ Richard Pascale, "Fitting New Employees into the Company Culture," *Fortune*, May 28, 1984, 28-42.

¹⁹ For an overview of this issue, see Schneider and Schmitt, op cit.

²⁰ Brian Dumaine, "The New Art of Hiring Smart," *Fortune*, August 17, 1987, 78-81.

²¹ Wilton Woods, "Personality Tests Are Back," *Fortune*, March 30, 1987, 74-82.

²² For a review of the track record of validation studies of personality tests as selection tools, versus other measures, see R.M. Guion and R.F. Gottier, "Validity of Personality Measures in Personnel Selection," *Personnel Psychology*, 1965, 18, 49-65; R.M. Guion, "Changing Views for Personnel Selection Research," *Personnel Psychology*, 1987, 40, 199-213; Schmitt and Robertson, op cit., and N. Schmitt, R. Gooding, R. Noe, and M. Kirsch, "Meta-Analysis of Validity Studies Published Between 1964 and 1982 and the Investigation of Study Characteristics," *Personnel Psychology*, 1984, 37, 407-422.

²³ Schneider and Schmitt, op cit., 353.

²⁴ See Wanous, op cit.

²⁵ "Japan's Gung-Ho U.S. Car Plants," op cit.

²⁶ Richard E. Walton, "From Control to Commitment in the Workplace," *Harvard Business Review*, March-April 1985, 76-84.

²⁷ Edward E. Lawler III, *High-Involvement Management*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986); S. Mohrman, G. Ledford, Jr., E.E. Lawler III, and A.M. Mohrman, "Quality of Work-Life and Employment Involvement," in C.L. Cooper and I. Robertson (Eds), *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1986).

²⁸ The case description is an illustrative overview of the steps and some techniques associated with hiring for the organization, not the job. Readers may contact the authors if they are interested in more details about the hiring process, such as assessment methods, validation strategies, scoring of simulations, and so on.

²⁹ D.N. Jackson, *Personality Research Form Manual*, 3rd ed., (Port Huron, MI: Research Psychologists Press, 1984). For a review of the PRF, see J.S. Wiggins, *Personality and Prediction: Principles of Personality and Assessment*, (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1973).

³⁰ The significant correlation between scores in the composite growth needs scale and performance in the pre-employment training program was a 0.22 (and it was 0.27 after correction for unreliability in the criterion). This compares favorably to the average validity of 0.15 found in a recent review of research using personality measures (N. Schmitt, R.Z. Gooding, R.A. Noe, & M. Kirsch, "Meta-Analysis of Validity Studies Published between 1964 and 1982 and the investigation of study characteristics," *Personnel Psychology*, 1984, 37, 407-422). In addition, scores on the social needs measure were significantly correlated (.16) with anticipated satisfaction.

³¹ See Wanous, op cit. for a discussion of this proposition.

³² For a review of the research findings, see S.C. Premack and J.P. Wanous, "A Meta-Analysis of Realistic Job Preview Experiments," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 1985, 70, 706-719.

³³ R.A. Guzzo, R.D. Jette, & R.A. Katzell, "The Effects of Psychologically Based Intervention Programs on Worker Productivity: A Meta-Analysis," *Personnel Psychology*, 1985, 38, 275-291; G.E. Ledford, Jr., T.G. Cummings and R.W. Wright, "The Structure and Effectiveness of High Involvement Organizations," Working Paper, Center for Effective Organizations, University of Southern California, 1991.

³⁴ Premack and Wanous, op cit.

³⁵ See Chatman, op cit.

³⁶ Ledford et al.

³⁷ William J. Hampton, "How Does Japan Inc. Pick Its American Workers?" *Business Week*, October 3, 1988, 84-88.

³⁸ For a discussion of these issues, see J.L. Holland, "Some Speculation About the Investigation of Person-Environment Transactions," *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 1987, 31, 337-340; R.H. Moos, "Person-Environment Congruence in Work, School and Health-Care Settings," *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 1987, 31, 231-247; and J.B. Rounds, R.V. Dawis, and L.H. Lofquist, "Measurement of Person-Environment Fit and Prediction of Satisfaction in the Theory of Work Adjustment," *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 1987, 31, 297-318.

³⁹ E.E. Lawler III, "Achieving Competitiveness by Creating New Organizational Cultures and Structures" in D.B. Fishman and C. Cherniss (Eds), *The Human Side of Corporate Competitiveness* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications), 69-101.

⁴⁰ *Assessment Strategies for Selection* (Pittsburgh, PA: Development Dimensions International, 1990).

⁴¹ D.R. Denison, *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness* (New York: Wiley, 1990).

About the Authors

David E. Bowen is associate professor of management in Business Programs at Arizona State University-West. He received his B.A. degree (1973) from Alma College, Alma, Michigan and his M.B.A. (1977) and Ph.D. (1983) from Michigan State University in business administration. Dr. Bowen's main research activities have been in the human resource management practices of service

organizations, the socialization of customers, and service-oriented manufacturing. He is co-author of *Service Management Effectiveness: Balancing Strategy, Human Resources, Operations and Marketing*. He is a member of the *Academy of Management Review* editorial review board. He has consulted with such companies as First Interstate Services Corporation, General Electric, Kinkos Copiers, and Bellcore of the AT&T System.

Gerald E. Ledford, Jr. is senior research scientist at the Center for Effective Organizations, School of Business Administration, University of Southern California. He received his B.A. in psychology (1973) from the George Washington University and his M.A. (1979) and Ph.D. (1984) in psychology from the University of Michigan. He has conducted research, published, and consulted on a wide variety of approaches to improving organization effectiveness and employee well-being, including employee involvement, pay innovations, job design, and union-management cooperation. He is co-author of three books, including *Large-Scale Organizational Change* (1989) and *Employee Involvement in America: A Study of Contemporary Practice* (1989).

Barry R. Nathan is Strategic Human Resources Planner at Southern California Gas Company. He taught human resources management at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Southern California, and industrial/organizational psychology at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He received his B.S. degree in zoology from the University of Maryland, and received his M.A. and Ph.D. (1983) in industrial/organizational psychology from the University of Akron. His primary research interests are in the area of human resource management, particularly evaluating employee performance, employee selection, and training. He is on the editorial board for the *Journal of Business and Psychology*, and is an occasional reviewer for the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, and *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*. Barry is a member of the Academy of Management and the Personnel Testing Council of Southern California.

Copyright of Academy of Management Executive is the property of Academy of Management. The copyright in an individual article may be maintained by the author in certain cases. Content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.