



Understanding applicant behavior in employment interviews: A theoretical model of interviewee performance

Allen I. Huffcutt ^{a,*}, Chad H. Van Iddekinge ^{b,1}, Philip L. Roth ^{c,2}

^a Department of Psychology, Bradley University, 1501 W. Bradley Avenue, Peoria, IL 61625, United States

^b Department of Management, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-1110, United States

^c Department of Management, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Job applicant interviews
Interviewee performance
Theoretical model

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to present a theoretical model of interviewee performance in selection interviews. Our model positions the construct of interviewee performance as a central mediating variable between candidate attributes and interviewer ratings. The model includes six sets of factors that may influence interviewee performance, interviewer ratings, or both (e.g., interviewer–interviewee dynamics). This model promotes a fundamental shift in the way we think about employment interviews, from a focus on interviewer ratings to a focus on interviewee performance. Factors like culture and interview specific self-efficacy, while receiving little attention in current literature, take on greater significance when viewed through the lens of interviewee performance. A number of avenues for future research are developed and presented, which we hope will encourage future research in this area.

© 2011 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

The employment interview continues to be a centerpiece of employee selection. Next to resumes and application blanks, the interview may be the most commonly used technique for assessing job candidates (Macan, 2009; Tross & Maurer, 2008). Research suggests that interviews can provide a high level of criterion-related validity when carefully designed (McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, 1994; Wiesner & Conshaw, 1988), and that they tend to do so without extensive impact on protected groups (Huffcutt & Roth, 1998). Moreover, candidates generally view interviews with positive reactions (Hausknecht, Day, & Thomas, 2004).

However, despite decades of research, we know surprisingly little about the factors that influence how interviewees perform in employment interviews, and in turn how that performance is translated into and/or associated with ratings made by the interviewer. One of the primary reasons for this lack of understanding is that research has tended to focus on properties of interviewer ratings, such as their reliability (Conway, Jako, & Goodman, 1995), criterion-related validity (McDaniel et al., 1994), subgroup differences (Huffcutt & Roth, 1998; see also Campion & Arvey, 1989), and bivariate associations with measures of constructs such as mental ability (e.g., Berry, Sackett, & Landers, 2007; Huffcutt, Roth, & McDaniel, 1996; Salgado & Moscoso, 2002).

A focus on interviewer ratings, while revealing many important and useful insights, tends to overlook the potentially complex cause-and-effect chains that precede these ratings. In particular, there are myriad individual differences that may influence the capability of interviewees to present their qualifications, a number of which have received only marginal attention in the literature (e.g., interview specific self-efficacy; Tross & Maurer, 2008) or have been overlooked entirely (e.g., cultural background; Banki & Latham, 2010). Further, there are situational and interactive factors that can influence how interviewees perform, such as interview medium (Chapman, Uggerslev, & Webster, 2003) and interviewer personality (see Graves, 1993; Rynes, 1989).

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 309 677 2589; fax: +1 309 677 3763.

E-mail addresses: huffcutt@bradley.edu (A.I. Huffcutt), cvanidde@fsu.edu (C.H. Van Iddekinge), rothp@clemson.edu (P.L. Roth).

¹ Tel.: +1 850 644 7867.

² Tel.: +1 864 656 1039.

We believe that continued advancement in interview research will require a stronger and more direct focus on interviewee performance. Unfortunately, although there is some primary research pertaining to attributes that influence interviewee performance (e.g., impression management tactics: Ellis, West, Ryan, & DeShon, 2002; Levashina & Campion, 2007) and a handful of interview process models (e.g., Arvey & Campion, 1982; Dipboye, 2005; Macan, 2009; Raza & Carpenter, 1987; Schmitt, 1976), there has not been a comprehensive effort to identify and integrate the wide array of personal and situational factors that may influence how interviewees perform, and the subsequent relationship between that performance and interviewer ratings.

Our goal is to address this deficit by developing a theoretical model of performance in selection interviews, one that positions the construct of interviewee performance as a central mediating variable between interviewee attributes and interviewer ratings. The model includes several groupings of factors that could influence interviewee performance, interviewer ratings, or both. A number of these factors, while receiving relatively little research attention, take on greater theoretical importance when viewed through the lens of interviewee performance. We hope that this model will challenge researchers and practitioners to think about the interview in new ways, as well as provide a basis for future research. We begin with a discussion of our focal construct, after which we present our model.

1. Interviewee performance

In the performance appraisal literature, it is widely recognized that supervisor ratings are often imperfect reflections of actual job performance (e.g., Heidemeier & Moser, 2009; Oh & Berry, 2009). For example, there tends to be only moderate correspondence between assessments of the same employees by different supervisors (King, Hunter, & Schmidt, 1980; Rothstein, 1990; Viswesvaran, Ones, & Schmidt, 1996). Campbell (e.g., Campbell, 1990; Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993) developed a conceptual model of job performance that positions job performance as a central mediating variable between employee attributes (e.g., knowledge and motivation) and supervisor ratings. In their model, the job performance construct represents the actual actions and behaviors of employees, with supervisor ratings being the subsequent evaluation of those actions and behaviors. Further, Campbell and colleagues identified the causal chain preceding employee performance, namely the three determinants declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and skills, and motivation, and the general attributes that precede these determinants such as ability, personality, and interests.

In a similar way, we propose that *interviewee performance* reflects how applicants behave during the interview, including what they say and what they do. More specifically, interviewee performance includes the content of interviewee verbalizations (e.g., answers to the interviewer's questions), how they deliver that content (e.g., articulation and pitch), and nonverbal behavior (e.g., facial expressions, posture, and dress). Interviewer ratings then become an operational measure of interviewee performance, much like supervisor ratings are an operational measure of job performance (Campbell et al., 1993).

As with job performance (Hunter, 1983; Schmidt, Hunter, & Outerbridge, 1986), individual differences may affect what interviewees say and do. Further, individual differences and situational factors, either individually or in tandem, can influence how interviewers rate that performance. The model of interviewee performance in Fig. 1 attempts to capture these elements, which we now describe. Concurrent with the presentation of our model, we outline directions for future research that we hope will encourage new ways of thinking about the interview and spur new lines of research.

2. Model of interviewee performance

Interviewees bring a relatively defined set of job-related attributes to the interview, including declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and skills, and motivation. We group these attributes under the label *Core Candidate Qualifications* in Fig. 1. These attributes reflect what interviewees know, what they can do, and how much effort they are willing to expend, respectively. Antecedents of the core candidate qualifications include more general attributes such as mental ability, personality, experience, interests, and goals. We group these antecedents under the label *General Attributes*.

However, interviewees do not always present their core candidate qualifications and general attributes accurately or completely (e.g., Barrick, Shaffer, & DeGrassi, 2009). As shown in Fig. 1, there are five sets of factors that can influence interviewee performance over and above the core candidate qualifications and general attributes of the candidates. Three of these sets (*Interviewer–interviewee dynamics*, *Interviewee state influences*, and *Supplemental preparation*) pertain somewhat directly to the capability of interviewees to handle the interpersonal and personal presentation aspects of an interview, and span various influences including state of mind, the interviewer, and prior dealings with interviews. A fourth set, *Interview design considerations*, identifies factors pertaining to the format of the interview (e.g., structure and medium). The final set, *Demographic/personal characteristics*, includes interviewee attributes (e.g., culture) that should not directly influence their capability to present their qualifications but in reality can.

Further, the perceptions and ratings of interviewers are not always accurate reflections of the level of performance candidates exhibit (e.g., Dougherty, Ebert, & Callender, 1986; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). As shown in Fig. 1, two of the sets of factors identified above, *Interview design considerations* and *Demographic/personal characteristics*, may have additional influences on interviewer ratings. For instance, structuring the method of scoring responses can improve the correspondence between interviewee performance and interviewer ratings, whereas candidate attractiveness has the potential to drive them further apart. A final set of factors, *Interviewer information processing effects*, primarily influences interviewer ratings and incorporates the varied limitations and nuances of human information processing. Each set of factors is reviewed in more detail below.

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات