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THE EFFECT OF PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF AN
INVITATION TO AN INITIAL JOB INTERVIEW

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF PHILLIPS GRADUATE INSTITUTE
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DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY IN ORGANIZATIONAL CONSULTING

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PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AND SELECTION PROCESS

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Abstract

Human Resources researches have long argued that hiring a successful employee not only requires a combination of relevant experience, technical skills, and abilities of the candidate, but also depends on a match between a candidate's personal values and the culture of an organization (also known as Person-Organization Fit). Current recruitment procedures initially use the computerized system of keyword parsing, matching candidate's experience, technical skills, and abilities (also known as Person-Job Fit) to the job requirements. Based on Person-Job Fit, hiring managers and Human Resources professionals make their initial selection of candidates for an initial job interview, leaving other important job fit "intangibles" to be assessed during the later stages of the recruitment process. Under this system, candidates with better Person-Organization Fit may not be selected for the initial interview. The current study examines the impact on the hiring process when Person-Organization Fit is introduced in the earliest stage of hiring, when the candidates are submitting their applications. The results demonstrated that the pool of candidates invited to an initial job interview can be significantly altered if hiring managers had knowledge of a job applicant's Person-Organization Fit in addition to the information about this applicant's knowledge, skills, and abilities currently derived from resumes. Organizations using Person-Organization Fit in recruiting may want to consider the impact of this type of information on hiring managers' decision making.

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Finally, and most importantly, I want to thank my family for their support, patience, and ever-lasting encouragement. My son Michael has always been a first reader of my school papers, sharing his insightful ideas and proof-reading my work. He has grown unbelievably fast and I am proud of his maturity, independence, and dedication to finishing his high school and getting into college while I was going through the doctoral program. Without my wife Marina, I cannot even imagine myself starting this doctoral program. Year after year, she has always had complete faith and confidence in me, sharing her love, wisdom, and support through all the stress and rigor of graduate school. Thank you!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

One of the highest priorities for managers and Human Resources professionals is to find the “right” employees for their organizations, helping them achieve and sustain a competitive edge (Grigoryev, 2006). Organizations have always been interested in finding and retaining well-qualified personnel, unrelated to the state of the economy. During economic prosperity, companies face fierce competition from their rivals to hire and retain the best candidates. During an economic downside, the supply of the workforce is much greater than its demand. Companies frequently become overwhelmed with the number of job applications to review, making the selection process slower and less effective.

Recent research has examined recruiting as a tool of organizational effectiveness (Barber, 1998; Breaugh, 1992; Rynes, 1991). Barber defines recruitment as “practices and activities carried on by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees” (p.5). He divides the process of recruiting into three phases: Generating Applicants, Maintaining Applicant Status, and Job Choice. The first stage, Generating Applicants, begins with reaching out to job applicants in order to attract them to the vacant positions in the organization. This stage ends with making a selection of candidates for an initial job interview. The second stage, Maintaining Applicant Status, focuses on sustaining a candidate’s interest. It starts with the initial selection of applicants for job interviews and ends when a single candidate has been identified. The final stage, Job Choice, includes persuading a desirable candidate to accept a job offer.

Every stage has an important role in the process of hiring the best available candidate; however, the current study focuses on one aspect of the initial stage of the hiring process – on the process of generating a pool of qualified applicants. After this process is completed, the number of available applicants can only deteriorate; hence, the initial stage of the hiring process creates the greatest possibility for the managers and Human Resources professionals to make the most effective selection decisions (Carlson, Connerley, & Meacham, 2002).

A typical job application includes information about candidate's technical skills and abilities, relevant experience, and education. Most applicants also included some so called "soft skills," such as an ability to work independently or as part of the team, leadership aptitude, communications skills, etc. This information is meant to demonstrate the potential employer how this candidate will fit their organization, but rarely is taken to consideration until the second and third stages of the recruitment process when more face to face communication occurs.

Making a prediction of how the applicant would potentially fit with the working environment is an organic part of the traditional hiring process. The approach of aligning the personal values and characteristics with an organization's environment has been thoroughly researched in the scholarly literature (Lewin, 1935; Murray, 1938; Pervin, 1968; Ekehammer, 1974). Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson (2005) have synthesized the components explored in the previous studies to a concept of Person-

Environment Fit, defining it as “the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched” (p.281).

In the realm of recruitment and selection, two common forms of employment fit have been identified: Person–Job Fit (P-J Fit) or the match between an individual and the requirements of a specific job; and Person–Organization Fit (P-O Fit), or the match between an individual and broader organizational attributes (Carless, 2005).

Prior to the use of the internet for soliciting candidates, organizations utilized newspaper ads, word-of-mouth, campus recruiting, trade organizations, and job fairs to attract applicants (Pogorzelski, 2003). While discussing the hiring processes prior to the internet becoming widely available, Pogorzelski described recruitment occurring at a “snail’s” pace. He identified several time consuming steps including “placing an ad, waiting weeks for applicants to reply, and then spending more weeks combing through stacks of resumes to find the right mix of experience, skills, salary requirements, and career goals.” With this long-haul approach, Human Resource departments have struggled to deliver business value of the human capital, to help their companies to efficiently respond to the constantly changing market realities.

When only a limited number of candidates apply for a given position, a company’s ability to choose from the best available talent can become restricted. Consequently, the jobs have often been handed to members of a “good old boys network,” or “an informal system of support and friendship through which men use their positions of influence to help others who went to the same school or college as they did

or who share a similar social background” (“Old-boy network,” 2009). Recruiting and hiring candidates based on “the good old boys network” has been negatively associated with personal biases and favoritism toward a specific gender or ethnic group. However, using “the good old boys network” results in a greater emphasis on cultural compatibility, the fit between the candidate and the organization, rather than accentuating candidate’s technical skills and abilities.

With the development of technology, the field of Human Resources has gone through a significant process changes. Nowadays, the internet has become an integrated part of everyday life and many businesses have started to adapt the rapidly rising approach of on-line recruiting. Using online recruiting has allowed companies to promote their vacant positions to a broad population, far beyond the good old boys network. Online recruiting has let candidates use powerful search engines to find and apply for the positions that match their qualifications and interests.

There are financial benefits to use on-line recruiting. One of its main advantages is that it allows organizations to expose itself to applicants at a fraction of the cost of other job advertising methods (Kaydo, 1999). As an additional financial benefit, the time spent on the recruitment and selection through on-line processes has been estimated to decrease by as much as 25 percent comparing to traditional approaches (Greenburg, 1998).

However, with the extended use of on-line recruiting, the selection process has undergone an unpredicted transformation (Lievens & Chapman, 2009). Technology now

allows companies to parse the text of the resumes, looking for a match to keywords used in job descriptions, even before the human eye would take a first look at the candidates. Consequently, the entire initial screening process has switched its emphasis to matching the technical skills and related experience, or P-J Fit, leaving the applicant's cultural compatibility with the organization, or P-O Fit, to be considered in later hiring stages, if at all.

Several researches and human resource practitioners have emphasized the importance of P-O Fit for the successful long term employment (Tom, 1971; Ryan & Schmitt, 1996; Christiansen, Villanova & Mikulay, 1997). Frequently, the applicant, perceived as the best match for the job during the selection process, based only on the technical skills and experience, cannot or would not want to stay on the job due to other, non-technical factors (Grigoryev, 2006).

Grigoryev (2006) found that 46% of twenty thousand new hires in 312 companies left their respective organizations within first 18 months. Follow up interviews with more than five thousand of the hiring managers found that only 11% of employees who left their organizations did so due to a lack of technical or professional competence. In fact, other "intangible" issues, such as motivational problems (15%), temperament issues (17%), lack of coachability (26%), and low levels of emotional intelligence (23%) accounted for the reason the new hire left the company. It was not immediately known if those "softer" issues were assessed during the recruitment procedures. However, a high number of employees failing to stay on a job for more than 18 months due to culture-

related reasons, suggests that companies could benefit from improving the selection processes in order to minimize the impact of employee turnover.

The true cost of the employee replacement is not measured only by tangible indicators. Harvard Manage Mentor Series (2005) published the “Worksheet for Calculating the Cost of Replacing a Specific Employee.” It helps managers calculate direct and indirect costs to hire and train a new employee, along with costs of low productivity of this employee while in training. The estimate of the turnover cost range from 25% to 150% of the employee’s annual salary (Schlesinger & Heskett, 1991; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2006), indicating that whatever the specific cost for a company is, replacing an employee is an expensive affair for the organization.

Cable and Judge (1996) argued that in order to improve hiring decisions and avoid high turnover costs, organizations should be attracting the candidates whose values, needs, and expectations are consistent with those that are inherent in the organization’s administrative system. Other researchers suggest that interviewers should look to hire people whose values match or are close to matching the organizational values (P-O Fit), support important organizational and group goals, and possess the personality characteristics that are consistent with the employer’s so called organizational personality (Bowen, Ledford, and Nathan, 1991; Posthuma, Morgeson, and Campion, 2002).

Problem Statement

The current study focuses on one specific aspect of recruiting – the process of generating a pool of qualified candidates for an initial interview. Upon receiving

resumes, current recruitment procedures use a computerized systems of keyword parsing, matching candidate's previous experience, technical skills, and abilities (or P-J Fit), to the job requirements for the vacant position. Based on a resume-requirement match, the Human Resources professionals and/or hiring managers invite candidates to an initial job interview. This leaves the consideration of other important job fit "intangibles," or P-O Fit, to the later stages of the process. In the current selection procedure, a candidate who has a higher P-O Fit but lesser P-J Fit may be eliminated from the hiring process, as his or her resume may not even be accounted for the interview selection. In result, the current process may not allow an organization to hire a candidate with the highest probability of successful long-term employment.

Delimitations

Due to the exploratory nature of the current study, there are several characteristics limiting the scope of the research. The study concentrates on the analysis of the impact of information about job applicant's P-O Fit to the hiring managers and Human Resources professionals' decision to invite this applicant to an initial job interview. Specifically, the purpose of the current study is to detect if such impact exists, without distinguishing the results between hiring managers and Human Resources professionals or making correlations among participants' demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, race, or ethnicity. Even though the outcome of these additional correlations may have a significant interest in the field of recruiting and selection, it does not have a direct relevance to the current study and can be used as a follow up topic in the future research.

Furthermore, this study does not take to consideration any demographic characteristics of the job applicant whose information was assessed by the participants. In attempt to control the variables and limit potential personal biases of the participants, the provided information did not mention the gender, age, race, ethnicity, or any other demographic characteristics of the job applicant. However, the possibility of personal biases toward applicants may affect selection decisions in day-to-day situations.

Finally, the current study has a requirement for the participant to currently reside in the United States of America. While the data collection instrument, an on-line survey, makes it theoretically possible to solicit participation from people who do not live in the United States, the scope of current research is limited to analyzing the selection process only in the US-based job market.

Assumptions

There are two assumptions are made in the design of the current study. First, it was assumed that the difference in opinions between Human Resources professionals and hiring managers is insignificant for the purpose of the study, as both types of the participants are required to have the same responsibilities of selecting the job applicants for the initial interview. Second, it was assumed that the potential difference in participants' demographic characteristics would not affect the outcome of the study as whether the information of job applicant's P-O Fit has an impact on their invitation to the initial interview, thus demographic data was not solicited.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current study examines the potential of introducing the concept of Person-Organization Fit in the initial stage of the candidate selection process. Specifically, this study concentrates on the impact that information about a job applicant's P-O Fit would have on the probability of this applicant being selected for an initial interview. The first hypothesis examines the existence of a potential impact:

H1: The information about job applicant's potential P-O Fit has a statistically significant influence on hiring managers' decision to invite this applicant to an initial job interview.

The second hypothesis examines the relationship between the level of job applicant's P-O Fit and the likelihood of this applicant to be invited to an initial interview:

H2: The level of a job applicant's potential P-O Fit has a direct correlation to the hiring managers' decisions to invite this applicant to an initial job interview – the higher the level of P-O Fit, the higher the probability that the applicant will be invited.

Research Variables

The probability that the job applicant is invited to an initial interview is the dependent variable for this research, while the manipulated information about job applicant's potential Person-Organization fit to the hiring company is the independent variable.

Summary

The current chapter introduces the background of the study, the problem statement, assumptions and delimitations, as well as research question and hypotheses. The second chapter reviews relevant literature for the current research. Next, a detailed description of the research methodology is provided. Then, the study results are outlined and analyzed. The document is concluded with the discussion chapter, summarizing the outcome of the study.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

The current chapter reviews literature relevant to the conducted study. First, the development of the computer technology and its impact on the recruitment process is analyzed. Next, the concept of a job applicant fit to the working environment and its components is reviewed. Finally, the measurements of employee fit to both the job and the culture of the organization, and its application to the selection process will be examined.

The Impact of Internet and Technology on Recruiting

The rapid development of the online recruiting and using Internet on initial stages of selection process has created new opportunities for organizations (Lievens & Harris, 2003). On-line job boards such as Monster.com, CareerBuilder.com, Dice.com, as well as many others, have allowed companies to significantly reduce costs for advertising open positions. Posting jobs online allows organizations to post larger amount of valuable information about vacant positions. Companies can attract prospective candidates with graphics, video, interactive text, and photos for a fraction of the cost the businesses would pay to traditional advertising media such as newspapers, magazines, and professional journals (Allen, Van Scotter, & Otondo, 2004, Lievens & Chapman, 2009).

Many businesses have started using their own websites for advertising vacant positions, creating a one-source view for candidates to search for vacancies, review job requirements for the openings, find other targeted data such as the company benefit

program, the organizational culture, corporate values, etc. Recently, scholars have analyzed how the content and aesthetics of a corporate website affects the efficacy of the recruitment process. Among the key parameters that make the on-line recruitment effective, researchers name appropriate web site content, aesthetics and appearance and website navigability (Cober, Brown, & Levy, 2004; Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober, & Keeping, 2003; Lee, 2005).

Another important benefit of online recruitment is an ability to tailor information about an organization for the individual needs of the candidate. Dineen, Ling, Ash, and DelVecchio (2007) have found that when the aesthetically pleasing corporate website contained the customized information about likely fit of the candidate, it would decrease viewing time and recall of the candidates that potentially don't fit for the organization, thus creating a lesser probability that those candidates will even apply to the open positions there.

There is at least one area where on-line recruitment is experiencing considerable drawbacks – many employers have been complaining about the significant increase in applications from unqualified candidates, inflicting additional costs on organizations to screen and filter out those candidates (Chapman & Webster, 2003).

Even though the role of technology in the recruitment process continues to grow, both employers and job applicants still value face-to-face interactions. Chapman et al. (2005) argue that employers, who have implemented effective technology-based screening processes, allow their recruiters to spend more face-to-face time with qualified

candidates rather than spending time manually sorting incoming resumes. In traditional candidate selection process, recruiters use matching of candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) to the requirements of the prospective job as a major factor in their hiring decisions (e.g. Caldwell and O'Reilly, 1990; Kristof-Brown, 2000; O'Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell, 1991; Schmitt and Chan, 1998). The current technology-based screenings are robust enough to completely automate this process by using keyword matching techniques. These techniques compare candidates' KSA, derived from their resumes, with the job requirements, allowing computers to make an initial screening decision to filter out "unqualified" candidates. After unqualified candidates are filtered out, recruiters use face-to-face interviews to make decisions about pursuing remaining applicants, their personal characteristics and values, attempting to make a prediction of how they fit to the hiring organization based on a wide range of "observable" dimensions (Caldwell and Burger, 1998; Rothstein and Jackson, 1984; Kristof-Brown, 2000).

Person-Environment Fit

Research suggests that higher levels of satisfaction and mental and physical well-being occur when there is a fit between the individual and the corporate environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Holland, 1997). Person-Environment compatibility has been broadly reviewed in the scholarly literature. Lewin (1935) has conceptualized human behavior as a function of the interaction between the person and the environment ($B=f [P, E]$). Kristof-Brown and colleagues (2005) has later applied Lewin's concept to the workplace, proposing a definition of Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit) as "the

compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched” (p.281).

In reviewing the literature dedicated to the interactions between an individual and a working environment, the notion of P-E Fit is conceptualized as a broad term, containing various common types (Carless, 2005). Among those types are the match between an individual and the requirements of a specific job, defined as Person-Job Fit; the match between an individual and cultural corporate values of the organization, defined as Person-Organization Fit; a Person-Group Fit, addressing the interactions between individuals in the workplace, and, lastly, a Person-Supervisor Fit, looking into the relationships between supervisor and subordinate (Carless, 2005; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

The compatibility between individuals and the environment has been viewed by researchers in a variety of ways. Studies distinguish P-E Fit between its *complementary* and *supplementary* characteristics. Complementary fit occurs when individual characteristics of the candidate add to the environment what it is missing (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). It has also been defined as when an individual or an organization provide the each other what they need (Cable & Edwards, 2004). Supplementary characteristics are viewed as similarity between individual and environmental characteristics. Cable and Edwards (2004) suggest that the unique influence of both complementary and supplementary characteristics of fit may predict outcomes. Research usually links complementary characteristics to the Person-Job Fit, while supplementary

characteristics are mostly associated with the Person-Organizational Fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

In applying the concept of fit to the recruitment and selection domain, research has mostly concentrated on factors, relating to candidate evaluation. These factors range from knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to personality characteristics, values, and applied social skills (Huffcutt, Conway, Roth, & Stone, 2001). The current study will concentrate on the Person-Job and Person-Organization types of the P-E Fit, as they are the most relevant for the selection stage of the recruitment process.

Person-Job Fit

The concept of Person-Job Fit (P-J Fit) is defined as a match between an individual's abilities and the demands and requirements of a specific job (Edwards, 1991). According to a theory of realistic job preview (RJP), accurate and realistic information about a job enables candidates to assess the level of congruence between their KSA and the job requirements (Wanous, 1980; Carless, 1995). In measuring P-J Fit, researchers use various dimensions, such as the individual's KSA, interests desired by the job, or specific job characteristics (Chuang & Sackett, 2005).

Researchers outline two basic forms of P-J Fit as the *demands-abilities* fit and the *needs-supplies* fit. The demands-abilities fit takes place when an individual's KSA are matching to the job description. The needs-supplies fit occurs when an individual's needs, wishes, or preferences are met by the job that he or she applies to or performs (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

On the selection stage of the recruitment process, detailed in the previous chapter, the first form (demands-abilities) of P-J Fit is used. Job demands are being outlined in the job description document, which is being matched using computerized keyword parsing system to the KSA of the applicant, listed in his or her resume. Job applicant's knowledge is assessed in forms of prior course work, job knowledge, and previous job-relevant work experience (Bretz et al., 1993; Hitt & Barr, 1989). At the same time, job applicant's skills and abilities are evaluated in forms of problem-solving skills, social skills, and time management skills (Chuang & Sackett, 2005).

The second form (needs-supplies) of P-J Fit is usually evaluated during the time of the employment. The needs-supplies form has been investigated in differently focused research, specifically in theories of job satisfaction, well-being, and adjustment (Porter, 1961; Locke, 1969; French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1974; Harrison, 1978; Caplan, 1983).

Person-Organization Fit

The second type of Person-Environment Fit, which addresses the compatibility between individuals and entire organizations, is called Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit). Research on P-O Fit has been oriented to the areas of job choice, selection decisions, job satisfaction, performance, organization commitment, turnover, and psychological well-being (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Researchers have operationalized P-O Fit in various ways. Tom (1971) suggested that success of the individuals in the workplace is measured better in organizations that emphasize individual-organizational similarity. Other approaches to operationalize P-O

Fit included personality-climate congruence (Christiansen, Villanova, & Mikulay, 1997; Ryan & Schmitt, 1996), goal congruence (Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991; Witt & Nye, 1992), and, finally, congruence of values (Chatman, 1989).

While each researcher operationalize P-O Fit differently and puts an emphasis on different objectives, they all aligned in defining P-O Fit as compatibility of individual characteristics to organizational values.

Measuring Approaches

Researchers differentiate approaches to measure fit into *subjective* fit, or the perceived match between the individual and environment, and *objective* fit, defined as the match between the person and environment that exists independently from the perceptions (French, Rogers, & Cobb, 1974). Kristof-Brown and colleagues (2005) propose to further distinguish the subjective fit between *perceived* fit, when a person directly assessing the environment, and subjective fit, when indirect assessments are used.

Research has been indecisive about reliability of either approach due to various criteria, context, and underlying mechanisms used when a measurement type is selected (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Piasentin and Chapman (2007) suggested that subjective fit is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and reduced turnover intentions. Some researchers have demonstrated that recruiters' judgments of applicant P-J fit are the strongest predictors of recruiters' hiring recommendations (Kinicki, Lockwood, Hom, & Griffeth, 1990; Kristof-Brown, 2000).

In contrast, results of other studies suggest that objective measures of P–O fit are more strongly related to behavioral outcomes (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; van Vianen, De Pater, & Van Dijk, 2007). The approach used in the current study is based on manipulating objective information about a job applicant’s P-O Fit to determine its applicability to the hiring managers’ selection decision.

Application of the Concept of Fit to the Recruitment Process

Both Person-Job and Person-Organization types of Fit has been linked to the recruitment process in various studies. One of the earliest applications of P-O Fit, the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) model, suggested that attraction to the company, being selected for hire, and remaining in an organization are determined by the perceived similarity between the individual and the organizational environment (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). Another model, called Organizational Culture Profile (OCP) compares the values that individuals feel are most indicative of them with the values that are most indicative of the organization (O’Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Cable & Judge, 1996).

Several studies have also investigated the relationships of perceived P-J and P-O Fit to the applicant’s intention to accept a job offer. Cable and Judge (1996) suggested that intentions to accept a job offer were related to a candidate’s perceptions of P-O Fit, but not P-J Fit. Conversely, another research demonstrated that there was a direct relationship between P-J Fit perceptions and intentions, while P-O Fit perceptions were not related to intentions to accept a job offer (Carless, 1995).

Both P-J and P-O Fit have been reviewed in the literature in connection to the recruitment domain. Several studies have investigated the significance of the P-J and P-O Fit variables on the three interview stages, discussed in the previous chapter (Adkins, Russel, & Werbel, 1994; Chuang, & Sackett, 2005). These studies demonstrated that P-J Fit was perceived by recruiters as more important than P-O Fit on the initial interview stages. It was also found that the importance of P-J fit became lower from the initial interview to later stages of the process, while the importance of P-O Fit rose with the approaching the final selection of the candidate.

Several studies have looked into correlation of P-O Fit to turnover and job performance, since these characteristics were recognized by the Civil Rights Act (CRA; 1964, 1991) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC; 1978) as appropriate employment criteria. Huffcutt, Conway, Roth, and Stone's (2001) conducted a meta-study, demonstrating that high-structure interviews that assess P-O Fit may be related to job performance. Conversely, their finding were challenged by the later study by Arthur, Bell, Villado, & Doverspike (2006), who did not find the positive relation of P-O Fit to the job performance, but suggested that P-O Fit is well correlated as a predictor of the turnover.

Other empirical studies have examined the importance of P-O Fit to the recruiters' decision-making processes (Gilmore & Ferris, 1989; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). Research results also suggest that recruiters' P-O Fit perceptions can be singled as one of the most important factors in predicting hiring recommendations (Cable & Judge, 1997; Kristof-

Brown, 2000). However, the concept of P-O Fit has been mostly studied using face-to-face interactions between job applicants and recruiters. The current study examines if the information of the potential P-O Fit, given to hiring managers during the initial selection process, would make an impact to their decision to invite the job applicant on the personal interview.

Summary

The current chapter reviewed the literature relevant to the conducted study. First, the impact of technology on the recruitment process was analyzed. Next, the concept of Person-Environment Fit and its components, specifically Person-Job Fit and Person-Organization Fit were described. Finally, the measuring approaches and application of using the concept of P-O Fit in the selection process was examined. The next chapter describes the research methodology used in the current investigation, followed by the results of the study, and discussion chapters.

Chapter 3: Research Method

This chapter describes the research methodology for the current investigation. First, selection of the participants is discussed, followed by a description of the process used to collect data. Next, an explanation of the study design and experimental treatments are presented. Finally, the statistical method used for data analysis is outlined.

The current research examines the impact of having information about a job applicant's potential Person-Organization Fit on the probability of this job applicant being selected by a hiring manager or a Human Resources professional for an initial interview. In order to measure the impact, a quantitative empirical study was conducted, using an on-line survey as its data gathering instrument.

Participants

An online survey has been conducted from a sample of hiring managers and Human Resources professionals. Approximately 150 participants were recruited through the Professional Networking websites, such as LinkedIn.com, FastPitch.com, or Naymz.com. The list of potential participants was compiled from the members of those networks, who either have a direct connection or share a common networking group (e.g. LinkedIn: HR, Executives and Managers, etc.) with the primary investigator. The potential participants received an invitation to participate in the online survey (see Appendix A). For the statistical method, discussed later in this chapter, Tate and Brown (1970) have recommended to obtain "samples yielding tables of 24 or more scores" (p.159) in order to ensure valid approximation of the results. Cook, Heath, & Thompson

(2000) have conducted a meta-analysis of response rates in or internet-based surveys, resulting in 34.6 percent rate of return. Based on this information, it was reasonable to expect at least 50 responses in the current study, approximately twice as many as the recommended minimum. In result, 57 solicited hiring managers or Human Resources professionals responded to the invitation to participate in the survey.

Invitations to participate in the survey were electronically sent to people who are at least 18 years old, and currently live in the United States of America. As an additional requirement, participants also had to currently have or have had in the past the responsibilities of initial resume screening and of inviting job applicants to an initial interview. No other demographic data has been collected for this study.

Data Collection and Measures

An on-line survey was used as the data gathering method for the current study. Brewerton & Millward (2001) state that the survey, as a data gathering method, is perhaps the most common research tool used due to its “low cost, minimal resource requirements and potentially large sample-capturing abilities” (p.99). Surveys are typically used to describe, rather than explain events. However, surveys can be used to explain events when used in an experimental design where the sample or treatment is manipulated (Bowers & Courtright, 1984). The current research utilizes the force choice survey question (Scott, 1968) asking participants to indicate their future behavior.

The use of a web-based survey has recently been compared to the use of traditional surveys (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). Several researchers have

argued that web-based surveys are “equivalent” (p.352) to long-used research methods as paper-and-pencil surveys (Piasentin & Chapman, 2007). The current study chose a web-based survey design due to its legitimacy as a data gathering research tool and its ability to closely mimic a real-life, current recruitment process.

Study Design and Treatments of the Participants

After receiving an invitation to participate and agreeing to the informed consent (see Appendix B), participants were randomly assigned either to the control group or to one of the three treatment groups with approximately equal number of participants in each group. This study used a simulated environment, including hypothetical company information, a job description for a vacant position, and a job applicant’s resume. The simulated environment was used to solicit participant response. Survey participants were not given any information concerning other treatment groups.

The information provided in the survey consisted of five documents given to all participants and one additional document, describing a job applicant’s level of P-O Fit, given only to those in a treatment group. There were three versions of the level of P-O Fit (Low, Medium, and High) provided to the participants, one for each different treatment group.

All participants were initially provided with the informed consent form (see Appendix B), where they had to indicate whether they agree to participate in the survey. If they chose to participate, they were provided with the survey instructions, describing the participant’s role in this study (see Appendix C). Next, they received a summary of

hypothetical hiring organization, and a list of its core corporate values (see Appendix D). The core corporate values were developed using the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP), a values-based research instrument. The OCP has been developed and previously used in studies about selection of a job candidate, assessing the compatibility between this candidate's personal values and the organization's core corporate values (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991).

Additionally, survey respondents received the job description for the vacant position in the company (see Appendix E), and a job applicant's resume (see Appendix F), outlining applicant's Person-Job characteristics. The resume has demonstrated a very strong match between the applicant's technical expertise and the job requirements. In order to minimize potential bias, there was no demographic data describing the job applicant. Furthermore, no organization-specific information about the job applicant's previous experience or education was provided.

The job description and the job applicant's resume have been assembled from randomly selected job offers, posted on well-known online job boards, such as Monster.com, Dice.com, and CareerBuilder.com. Both the job description and the resume were reviewed by three subject matter experts to ensure their face validity.

In order to replicate the amount of data hiring managers and Human Resource professionals use in their current selection process, the members of the control group did not receive any information about the candidate's P-O Fit. All other participants, randomly assigned to three different treatment groups, received information about the

level of the candidate's Person-Organization Fit (see Appendix G), based on the hypothetical results of Situational Judgment Test (SJT). The selection of an internet-based SJT as a P-O Fit measurement tool is supported by various research, validating its predictability to the job performance (McDaniel, Morgeson, Finnegan, Campion, & Braverman, 2001), and its high cross-mode equivalence to the similar tests, conducted using paper-and-pencil instruments (Potosky & Bobko, 2004).

In the hypothetical Situational Judgment Test, a job applicant was given a series of five situations; each of them linked to one of the company defined corporate values. Each situation was described in a short paragraph and followed by four possible courses of action. A job applicant was asked to choose the course of action they would most likely take and one they would least likely take in responding to the provided situation. Each response, matching hiring company's expectations of how the provided situation is handled, was scored as one point, making the maximum score for the entire test to be equal to ten points.

The results of simulated SJT varied per treatment group. The members of the first treatment group were told that the job applicant had two matches out of ten, possessing a *low* level of Person-Organization Fit with the hiring company. Similarly, members of the second treatment group were told that the job applicant had five matches, a moderate Person-Organization Fit. Finally, the members of the third treatment group were told that there was an eight out of ten match, possessing a high match of Person-Organization Fit with the hiring company.

The actual experimental measure was a simple forced choice question. After participants have read all the provided information, they were asked a simple Yes/No question: *Based on the information provided on the previous pages of the survey, would you invite the reviewed candidate to an initial interview?* Participants were also offered the chance to elaborate on their decision or provide other comments in a free-entry text area. Their answers were stored in a secure database for further analysis.

The percentage of “Yes” answers was compared among the control group and various treatment groups. Specifically the correlation between the control group and each of the treatment groups, as well as the relationships between all of the treatment groups were analyzed.

Data Analysis

Based on the setting in the current research, the Cochran’s Q test for comparing the dichotomous variable between multiple related samples (Bryman & Cramer, 2000) has been selected as an appropriate statistical method to analyze collected data. Researchers use the Cochran's Q test in a design where there is one independent variable, with three or more levels. In this setting, participants undergo all conditions, or participants are matched on a relevant variable (Gliner & Morgan, 2000). The Cochran’s Q test requires that a) the sample of the subjects is randomly selected from the population it represents; and b) the dependent variable is represented in the form of a dichotomous categorical measure involving two mutually exclusive categories (Sheskin, 2003). The current study aligned with both requirements by randomly assigning participants to one

of four groups and requesting them only to answer a single Yes/No question. In the data analysis, “Yes” answers were coded as 1s, and “No” answers were coded as 0s.

The actual Q value, serving as an output of this test, was calculated based on pre-set and variable parameters. The size of the sample and type of the responses (1s or 0s) served as variable parameters. The degree of freedom, or the number of treatment groups minus one, and the error margin, which was set at 5% as recommended by best practices in statistical analysis, are served as pre-set parameters.

According to the rules of this statistical method, the actual Q value is compared to the pre-defined threshold value, which varies for different degrees of freedom. In the current study, when the four treatment groups are compared, the degree of freedom = 3, and the threshold value is set as 7.81. If two groups are compared, the degree of freedom = 1, and the threshold value is equal to 3.84. In order to reject the null-hypothesis of equal probability of success and failures, the actual Q value should be greater than the threshold value.

The Cochran’s Q test is a commonly used statistical procedure for testing hypotheses that have no inter-observer biases, which is supported by the current study. It is distributed as part of SPSS statistical package as well as independent stand-alone or add-on Microsoft Excel-based programs.

Summary

The current chapter outlined the method used to collect and analyze data. An anonymous on-line survey was conducted based on a simulated selection process. Approximately 150 hiring managers or Human Resources professionals were invited to participate in the survey. Fifty seven of them responded to the invitation and participated in the study. Data was collected electronically; it will be stored for two years in the secure environment, and destroyed thereafter. A Cochran's Q test was used as a statistical method to analyze the data. Participants were told that they could request the survey results from the primary investigator.

Chapter 4: Results

The previous chapter detailed the research method used for the current study. This chapter outlines the study results. First, the characteristics of the obtained sample are presented. This is followed by the participants' answers to the survey question and a summary of their responses to the optional request for elaboration. Finally, the analysis of the survey results, including test statistics and level of probability, is presented.

The Sample

The sample for this study included 57 hiring managers or Human Resources professionals, who currently have or have had in the past the responsibilities of screening job applicants and inviting them to a personal interviews. Prior to taking the survey, participants were asked to agree to an informed consent statement (see Attachment B), confirming that they were currently living in the United States of America and were 18 years old or older. No other demographic characteristics were requested. Participants were randomly assigned to either a control group or one of three treatment groups with approximately equal number of respondents in each group. Table 1 summarizes the distribution of participants among treatment groups.

Table 1

Distribution of participants among treatment groups

Control Group	Low P-O Fit Group	Medium P-O Fit Group	High P-O Fit Group	Total
14	16	12	15	57

Responses

Survey question. Participants were required to indicate whether they would invite the hypothetical job applicant to an initial interview based on the information provided in the survey. Participants' responses to the survey question varied significantly from the control group to the treatment groups and from one treatment group to another. It was found that survey responses from the members of control group, High P-O Fit, and Medium P-O Fit groups would more likely invite the job applicant to an initial interview (93%, 73% and 58% respectively), while members of Low P-O Fit group would less likely invite (23%) this applicant.

Figure 1 summarizes the output of the survey responses.

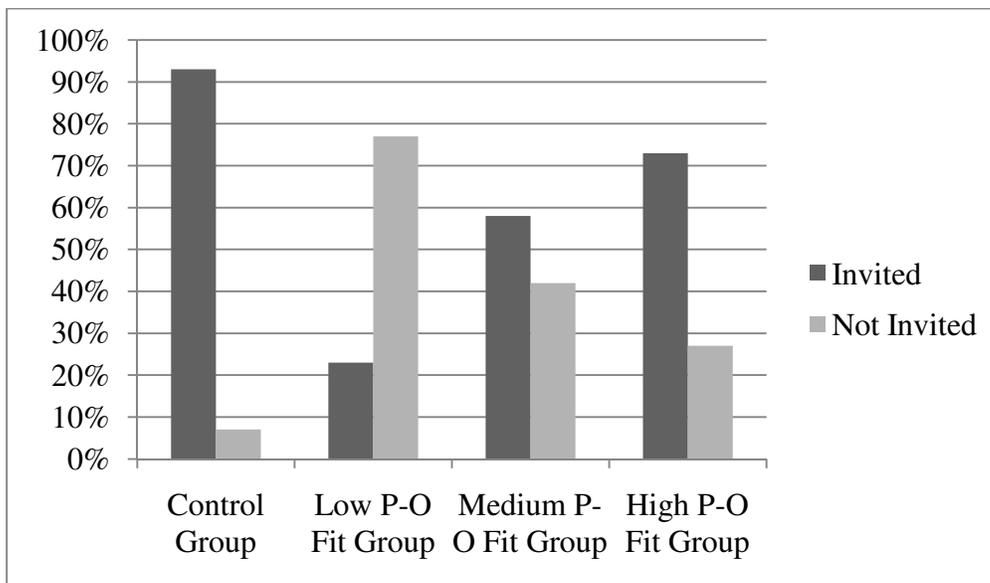


Figure 1 – Response Category per Treatment Group

Optional elaboration request. In addition to the required response to the survey question, participants were given an option to elaborate on their decision in a free-entry form. Almost 95% of respondents took the opportunity to elaborate, providing input about their rationale for the decision they made.

The complete list of optional responses, sorted by treatment group, along with participants' decisions about inviting the job applicant to an initial job interview is provided in the Appendix I.

Analysis

Research hypotheses. There were two research hypotheses analyzed in the current study. First hypothesis examined the impact of P-O Fit on hiring managers' decisions to invite a job applicant to an initial interview. Specifically it tested for a statistical difference between the responses of the hiring managers or Human Resources professionals who were assigned to either the control group or one of the three treatment groups.

The observed Q value was calculated at 14.75, which is significantly higher than the statistical threshold of 7.81 established for this error margin. This means that when the responses from all four groups are collectively compared, a statistical significance between responses in those groups exists. As a result of these calculations, the first hypothesis, stating that the information about job applicant's P-O Fit has an impact on hiring managers' decisions to invite this applicant to an initial interview, was supported.

Further analysis was completed to test the difference in responses between the control group and each of the other treatment groups. Specifically, in analyzing the difference between the control group and Low P-O Fit treatment group, the Q value was calculated at 8.33%, which is greater than the threshold value of 3.84% used when only two groups are compared. This result demonstrated the statistical significance in the difference of participants' responses for those two groups. This means that participants in the control group given no P-O Fit information decided to invite a job applicant to an initial interview at a different rate than participants from the Low P-O Fit treatment group. Based on the percentages listed in the Figure 1, it can also be inferred that participants in the Low P-O treatment group were less likely to invite a job applicant to an initial interview.

Similarly, the actual Q value of comparing results between the control group and the Medium P-O Fit group was calculated at 4.50, also statistically significant. Similarly, this means that participants in the control group invited a job applicant to an initial interview at a different rate than participants from the Medium P-O Fit treatment group. Again, based on the percentages listed in the Figure 1, it can be inferred that participants in the Medium P-O Fit treatment group were less likely to invite a job applicant to an initial interview.

In comparing the control group with the High P-O Fit groups, the actual Q value was calculated only at 0.67, or less than the threshold value of 3.84. This result is different from the other two treatment groups. The low Q value in the last case were

expected as both groups received the information about the job applicant that could be positively perceived – the strong resume and, in case of the treatment group, a high level of P-O Fit to the organization. Consequently, these results demonstrate that with increasing the level of P-O Fit the difference between responses of the hiring managers from those groups and the responses from the control group becomes less significant.

Similarly, the differences in responses of participants assigned to one or another treatment group were analyzed. In comparing survey results between Low and Medium P-O Fit treatment groups, the actual Q value for these results was calculated at 2.67. The difference between responses of hiring managers assigned to the Medium and High P-O Fit treatment groups produced a calculated Q value of 2.00. When the results of Low and High P-O Fit treatment groups were compiled, the actual Q value was calculated at 8.00. These results demonstrated that even though comparing Low and High P-O group responses with the Medium P-O Fit group did not exceed the threshold value or 3.84, the difference of responses in between Low and High P-O groups was statistically significant. This indicates that the large difference of the P-O Fit level has an impact on hiring managers' decisions to invite a job applicant to an initial interview.

The differences in results among the treatment groups supported the analysis completed for the second hypothesis. In the second hypothesis, a directional prediction was used. Specifically, it stated that the level of a job applicant's potential P-O Fit affects the hiring managers' decisions to invite this applicant to an initial job interview –

the higher the level of P-O Fit, the higher the probability that the applicant will be invited.

The results of the survey supported the directional prediction. Participants assigned to the Low P-O Fit treatment group, chose to invite the job applicant to an initial interview in 23% cases, the participants of the Medium P-O Fit group invited this applicant in 58% cases, and finally, the members of the High P-O Fit group selected the affirmative response in 73% cases. Figure 2 summarizes the positive response rate.

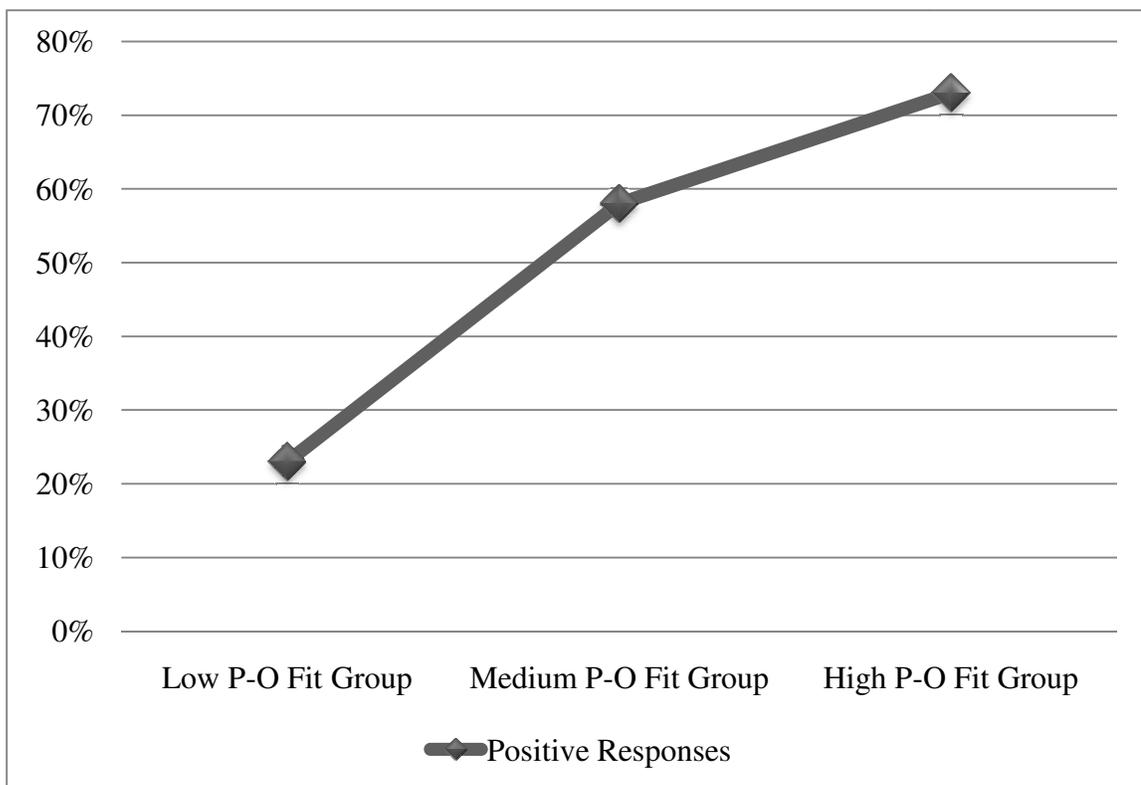


Figure 2 - Number of Positive Responses per Treatment Group

The complete testing results of the research hypotheses are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2

Testing results of research hypotheses

Hypotheses	Treatment Groups Compared	Threshold Value @5% error margin	Actual Q Value
H1	All four	7.81	14.75
	Control Group (CG) and Low P-O Fit Group	3.84	8.33
	CG and Medium P-O Fit Group	3.84	4.50
	CG and High P-O Fit Group	3.84	0.67
	Low P-O Fit Group and Medium P-O Fit Group	3.84	2.67
	Low P-O Fit Group and High P-O Fit Group	3.84	8.00
	Medium P-O Fit Group and High P-O Fit Group	3.84	2.00
H2	All four	N/A	N/A (see fig.2)

Optional elaboration request. The design of the current study offered participants an optional opportunity to elaborate on their decisions to invite or reject a job applicant. Almost ninety-five percent of the participants used the free-entry form to express their opinions, which were compiled and analyzed. Such high percentage of participants offering their opinions was not anticipated. However, this data proved to be a rich source of information.

In total, there were 57 participants in the current study. Fifty four provided optional responses on the free entry form. Table 3 outlines the complete tally of participants who provided written responses.

Table 3

Provided Responses per Treatment Group

Participants	Control Group	Low P-O Fit Group	Medium P-O Fit Group	High P-O Fit Group	Overall
Total	14	16	12	15	57
Provided Responses	12	16	11	15	54
Percentage	86%	100%	92%	100%	95%

Out of 42 respondents assigned to either Low, Medium or High P-O Fit treatment groups who provided responses on an optional elaboration request, twenty nine (69%) cited the information about P-O Fit for the selection of job applicants to the initial interview. In particular, fourteen participants (33%) noted that both the resume and SJT results, demonstrating applicant's P-O Fit, had approximately equal relevance for their decision, while fifteen participants (36%) believed that the level of P-O Fit is more relevant in candidate's selection. The other thirteen participants (31%) from either Low, Medium or High P-O Fit treatment groups felt that the resume had more relevance in their decision. Due to a limited number of responses per treatment group, these percentages were only calculated for the combined sample of participants who were not assigned to a control group.

Twenty of 42 participants from either Low, Medium or High P-O Fit treatment groups, who submitted their opinions via optional free-entry form decided to invite a job applicant to an initial interview. Ten of them (50%) cited both a good match of the skills and experience in the resume and acceptable SJT results of candidate's P-O Fit.

Twenty two participants from the treatment groups chose not to invite their job applicant to an initial interview. When a job applicant was rejected, 14 participants (64%), who provided written comments, referred to the concerns about level of P-O Fit as the main reason for their decision. This anecdotal evidence supports the finding that the information about P-O Fit received by hiring managers during the process of selection significantly influences their decision to invite job applicants to an initial interview.

Among participants from the control group, 12 of 14 respondents submitted written responses on an optional elaboration request. Even though participants from this group did not have any information about a job applicant's P-O Fit provided, four respondents (33%) cited a necessity of assessing various P-O Fit components, such as teamwork, leadership, etc. in their final hiring decision.

Some participants provided polarized opinions in their written responses. One participant who did not invite the job applicant to an initial interview, reported concerns about this applicant's level of P-O Fit: "Fitting in with the culture is just as important as technical skills and with such a low score it would not likely be a good fit." Conversely, another participant would not consider the P-O Fit as a restriction to inviting a candidate to an initial interview: "SJT results would not deter me. Personal observations and answers to interview questions are a better way to assess applicant values." Among other examples, participants offered their words of wisdom about the importance of P-O Fit in hiring the best candidates, such as "Specific job-related skills can usually be taught or

coached. However, it is usually much more difficult to teach or coach a fit with values and culture.”

The elaboration on participants’ decision-making was requested but not required in the scope of this study, therefore it was not used to develop any scientifically based conclusions. However, the serendipitous and invaluable information gathered as part of this investigation can become a starting point for the future studies about P-O Fit and recruitment processes. These preliminary results have demonstrated the enthusiasm participants had in sharing their thoughts about using P-O Fit based information. From the number of participants providing non-required opinions, it could be inferred that the majority of hiring managers and Human Resources professionals take the responsibilities of making hiring decisions seriously, welcoming additional information about job applicant’s P-O Fit to improve the selection process.

Summary

Overall, the results of the current study demonstrated that introducing information about a job applicant’s P-O Fit at the earliest stage of the recruitment process does have an impact on hiring managers’ decision to invite the job applicant on the initial interview. Additionally, it was found that the probability to be invited to an initial interview is increased with the increased level P-O Fit. Both research hypotheses were supported. The implications of this research, along with its limitations, recommendations for future research, and other considerations are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter opens discussion about the results of the current investigation. First, the implications of study results are summarized. Next, research findings are explained, and their practical application to the field of recruiting is discussed. This is followed by an outline of study limitations and recommendations for further investigations. The chapter ends with the author's conclusions, summarizing the process and outcome of the study.

Implications

The results of the current research have both theoretical and practical implications for the field of recruiting. The current study builds on the work of Bowen, Ledford, and Nathan (1991), Cable & Judge (1996), and Posthuma, Morgeson, and Campion (2002), all of whom argued that P-O Fit is an important component in hiring decisions and employee retention. However, while the significance of matching personal and organizational values for successful employment has been repeatedly demonstrated, the evaluation of P-O Fit was, in most studies, conducted during the later stages of the recruitment process. While the current study supported the previous work on P-O Fit significance in the recruitment process, it also introduced the concept of matching a candidate's P-O Fit in a step preceding the initial interview - the process of selection, in order to allow hiring managers to have more information before making a decision about inviting the job applicant to an initial interview.

The results of the current study demonstrated that the pool of candidates invited to an initial job interview can be significantly altered should hiring managers had the knowledge of a job applicant's P-O Fit with the organization, in addition to the information about this applicant's knowledge, skills, and abilities currently derived from resumes by computerized processes. As discussed in previous chapters, the evaluation of P-O Fit can be completed electronically as part of the application process. This adds yet another dimension to the information about the job applicants that hiring managers receive when they first time review the application.

Another implication of the results is that in order to introduce P-O Fit evaluation to the process of candidate selection, the company would need to increase the awareness of their corporate cultural values, increasing the potential of hiring candidates who possess the better overall fit for the organization and further retaining them for a longer term.

Through the analysis of responses from the participants in the Low P-O Fit treatment group the power of information about a job applicant's P-O Fit with the organization was emphasized. According to the results, 77 percent of the participants were not going to invite a job applicant who possessed a low P-O Fit to an initial interview, even though this applicant had a strong resume. This means that if information about P-O Fit is considered during the selection process, the job applicant's resume, demonstrating a strong match of knowledge, skills and abilities (or P-J Fit) to the job descriptions, may not warrant an invitation to an initial interview without a strong match

of P-O Fit. This finding implies that organizations may need to revisit their requirements for inviting candidates, by seeking better balanced matches of both P-J and P-O Fit characteristics. Further, it points to the need for additional research in this area.

Lastly, the structural approach to electronic P-O Fit evaluations will allow hiring managers to further define the organizational requirements for matching the P-O Fit, and use those requirements in personal evaluations of candidates during the later stages of the recruitment process, increasing its overall objectivity.

Limitations

This section examines the limitations inherited in the current investigation. These include single field constraint, data collection timeframe, solicitation of responses, and affiliation with professional networking.

Single field constraint. The study materials (company information, job description, candidate's resume) were based on examples from the field of Informational Technology. It is undetermined if the outcomes of this investigation apply to other job fields. Therefore, these outcomes should not be generalized to the other fields without additional testing.

Data collection timeframe. In the current investigation, data was collected over a four weeks period. Although the primary investigator is unaware of any environmental intervening variables occurring during this period, the possibility exist that some variable outside of the control of the primary investigator could have influenced participants'

responses. A replication of this study may test if intervening variables played a role in the results of the current study.

Solicitation of responses. All study results were solicited electronically, through a web-based survey. As previously discussed, this form of data gathering was used in order to closely mimic the current process of job applicant selection in the organizations that use internet for their recruitment processes. However, there is a possibility that a paper-and-pencil based data gathering survey could produce different results.

Affiliation with professional networking. The sample of respondents was drawn from the members of professional and social networks associated with the primary investigator. A replication of this study, using a different sampling method, could produce different results.

Further Research

Based on the results of this research, several areas for future studies can be suggested, such as examining additional variables, expanding the job field diversity, identifying whether the information about P-O Fit has a dominating influence over the resume data, and discussing a perceived feasibility of introducing the concept of P-O Fit to the selection stage of the recruitment process.

Additional variables. A study examining additional variables, with the substantial increase in the total number of respondents could be undertaken. The sample of participants (N=57) used in the current study lacked sufficient power to introduce additional variables for the analysis without jeopardizing the validity of results. In using

a larger sample, in depth analysis of demographic data could be completed. The differentiation of responses between Human Resources professionals and Hiring Managers can be used as one demographic variable. Other demographic characteristics such as gender, age, race, or ethnicity of the participants or of the job applicant, could be introduced as additional variables for the data analysis.

Field diversity. A comparable study using other than Informational Technology related materials (e.g. resume, job description) would evaluate if the current research findings are field-independent or the results of the study are specific only to recruiting in the field of Informational Technology.

Dominating influence. A separate study could assess which concept of fit, P-O or P-J, has a greater level of influence on hiring managers or Human Resources professionals, complementing the current research approach of evaluating if such influence exists.

Perceived feasibility. Finally, an additional study, utilizing focus groups or interviews with hiring managers and Human Resources professionals would assess the familiarity of respondents with the concept of Person-Organization Fit, its applicability to the job applicant selection process, and its perceived feasibility in the effort of selecting candidates best suited for a job. The willingness of hiring managers or Human Resources professionals to participate in this focus group or interview based study can be inferred by the fact that 95% of participants in the current study submitted voluntary comments.

Other Considerations

An evaluation of the P-O Fit in the selection phase of the recruitment process requires additional considerations. Introducing the concept of P-O Fit before the initial interview establishes a measurable way to assess the match of a job applicant's personal values with the organizational values, complementing or contradicting subjective perceptions of hiring managers about a job applicant's P-O fit during face-to-face interviews. The potential biases of the interviewers that could be introduced during subjective evaluations should also be evaluated.

Before implementation of this approach, an organization should investigate various instruments of evaluating P-O Fit, their appropriateness and validity. As it was discussed in the previous chapters, the current study uses Situational Judgment Tests as an evaluating tool, based on their validity and predictability to the job performance, investigated in previous research work (McDaniel, Morgeson, Finnegan, Campion, & Braverman, 2001). Organizations may wish to evaluate other instruments to determine the best suitable approach for their specific needs.

As part of evaluation of measuring instruments that assess job applicant's P-O Fit, organizations should consider legal and ethical implications of testing candidates for P-O Fit during the application process. Specific attention should be paid to the legal aspects of using personality, aptitude, or intelligence tests, ensuring that those tests comply with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's validation procedures.

Conclusion

Recent research has demonstrated the importance of Person-Organization Fit in recruiting and retaining candidates for a long-term employment (Tom, 1971; Ryan & Schmitt, 1996; Christiansen, Villanova & Mikulay, 1997). This means that companies that do not assess P-O Fit of the candidate during recruitment may incur higher costs of employee replacement due to higher turnover rate among employees whose personal values do not fit organizational values. Other companies evaluate P-O Fit during the interview phase of recruitment process; however, this process is generally unstructured and opened for personal biases (Grigoryev, 2006). In using P-O Fit late in the recruitment process may potentially eliminate a candidate who has a higher P-O Fit but lesser match of KSAs (or Person-Job Fit), as his or her resume may not even be accounted for the selection for an initial interview. The current study addressed the concern of unwarranted rejection.

In attempt to find an alternative approach to unwarranted rejection of job applicants, this study began investigating the impact of introducing the concept of P-O Fit on the earliest stage of the recruitment process – the selection of a candidate for an initial interview. The current results demonstrated that P-O Fit, introduced early in the recruitment process had a significant impact on hiring managers' or Human Resources professionals' decision to invite a job applicant to an initial interview, supporting the first hypothesis of the study. The second hypothesis which predicted that the higher the level of P-O Fit of the job applicant the more likely this applicant would be invited to an initial

interview has also been supported. Lastly, the data analysis of written responses, submitted by respondents through an optional free-entry form, revealed that hiring managers value the information about P-O Fit, citing it as reasoning for their decision-making in 69% cases.

Overall, this experiential study supported results of previously reported investigations and extended the application of using P-O Fit on the initial stage of the recruitment process. The results of the study could open the door to further investigations in this area, by expanding research variables, involving different job fields, and introducing alternative ways to assess P-O Fit among candidates on the job market.

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Appendix A

Online Survey Invitation

Dear Colleague,

I am a doctoral candidate in Organizational Consulting, conducting a research project that studying the job applicant selection process. The study involves hiring managers and Human Resources professionals who currently have or recently had the responsibilities of screening the resumes of job applicants and making a decision to invite them to the initial interview. I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. The time commitment is approximately 15-20 minutes. If you agree to participate, please enter the survey by clicking [here](#).

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Sincerely yours,

Leon Tonkonogy

Doctoral Candidate in Organizational Consulting

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

You have been invited to participate in a study that evaluates the impact of an applicant's characteristics on the decision to invite that applicant to an initial job interview. This study is conducted by Leon Tonkonogy, an Organizational Consulting doctoral candidate. You are invited to participate because you currently hold, or recently held, a position that required making decisions regarding inviting candidates to job interviews.

Your involvement will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes, however you may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time. This on-line survey is anonymous and no records that could personally identify you will be logged.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you can contact Leon Tonkonogy at leoton@gmail.com or his faculty advisor, Nancy J. Duresky, PhD at njdhope@gmail.com.

Please choose Yes or No to respond to the following statement:

I have read this form and understand what it says. I confirm that I am 18 years or older, currently reside in the United States, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this research project.

Yes No

Appendix C

Survey Instructions

You are a hiring manager of a mid-sized technology company. The Senior Software Engineer position is currently vacant. As a hiring manager, you will be provided with the specific information about the company, the job description for this vacant position, and the resume of one of many candidates that applied for this position. After reading the information, you will be asked if you would invite this candidate to an initial job interview.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Appendix D

Company Information

Our company is interested in hiring a highly motivated, technically skilled professional, who possesses personal values closely matching the following core values of the organization:

- **Teamwork** -- We promote and support a diverse, yet unified, team. We work together to meet our common goals.
- **Respect** -- We honor the rights and beliefs of our fellow associates, our customers, our shareowners, our manufacturers and our community. We treat others with the highest degree of dignity, equality, and trust.
- **Accountability** -- We accept our individual and team responsibilities and we meet our commitments. We take responsibility for our performance in all of our decisions and actions.
- **Integrity** -- We employ the highest ethical standards, demonstrating honesty and fairness in every action we take.
- **Innovation** -- We are creative in delivering value to our fellow associates, customers, shareowners, and community. We anticipate change and capitalize on the many opportunities that arise.

Appendix E

Job Description

SENIOR-LEVEL SOFTWARE ENGINEER**Job Summary**

The Senior-Level Software Engineer provides work direction, develops system specifications, and programs technical solutions for complex business problems defined by systems analysts in order to promote operational efficiency and facilitate management decision making.

Essential Functions

- Develops detailed system design specifications to serve as a guide for system/program development.
- Codes, tests, debug, and documents more-complex programs; enhances existing programs to ensure that data processing production systems continue to meet user needs.
- Identifies and resolves system operating problems in order to provide continuous business operations.
- Interfaces with user management regarding project status and user needs to promote an environment of user cooperation and satisfaction.

- Provides guidance and training to less-experienced programmers in order to improve productivity.
- Assists in scheduling, determining manpower requirements, and estimating costs to project completion in order to meet user requirements.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Education:

To perform competently in this position, the candidate must have a minimum of 8-10 years of object oriented programming experience, specifically possessing strong Java/J2EE engineering skills. The candidate must also be proficient in Web Server technology (WebLogic, Apache, etc.). A good understanding of .Net technology and SQL Server/Oracle development experience would be extremely beneficial. The candidate should have a broad background in company business functions, as well as a good understanding of systems and operations. Strong analytical and collaborative skills are required. The candidate must have at least a Bachelor Degree in Computer Science or related area.

Appendix F

Applicant's Resume

CANDIDATE NAME

Address Line

City, State, Zip

Telephone / Email

Professional Objective

Experienced senior-level Java Developer with proven expertise in object-oriented analysis and design and exceptional record overseeing all facets of Software Development Life Cycle, from analysis and design to implementation and maintenance.

Qualification

- Diverse experience utilizing Java tools in business, Web, and client-server environments including Java Platform, Enterprise Edition (Java EE), Enterprise Java Bean (EJB), JavaServer Pages (JSP), Java Servlets (including JNDI), Struts, and Java database Connectivity (JDBC) technologies.
- Fluid understanding of multiple programming languages, including C#, C, C++, JavaScript, HTML, and XML.
- Excellent communications skills. Adept at building strong working relationships with coworkers and management.
- Talented problem solver able to think "outside the box."

- Proven background leading teams in stressful, deadline-oriented environments.

Work Experience

Startup Technology Consulting Company -- Redwood City, CA Feb.2008 – Present

Senior Software Engineer – Team Lead

- Team leader on numerous projects utilizing Java, Java EE, Enterprise Java Bean, and Apache Struts Web applications to create fully-integrated client management systems.
- Oversee all stages of design, development, and deployment of new Java-based vendor application system for financial-services industry.
- Work directly with management, vendors, and third parties to ensure that Web-site's financial transactions and database management applications operate at peak efficiency.
- Led a team of four coworkers on nine separate projects, ensuring projects were completed on time and within budget.
- Played key role in enhancing client's Web reporting system, reducing time of delay financial tracking analysis by 30%.

Large Technology Consulting Company -- San Jose, CA

Oct.2004 – Dec.2007

Software Engineer

- Provided robust network protocol support in industrial strength security, database connectivity with Oracle, and CORBA interoperability in several projects.
- Created prototypes, specifying functionalities, generating required code, integrating systems and implementing packages, deployment plans and understanding business requirements along with design solutions.
- Supported other J2EE web development efforts using the Rational Unified Process, UML, UNIX and Windows NT/XP Workstation environments with BEA Workshop for Web logic.

Medium-Sized Financial Services Company -- San Jose, CA

Mar.2001 – Aug.2004

Application Programmer

- Assisted in designing, building, and maintaining database to analyze life cycle of checking and debit transactions.
- Developed, tested, and implemented financial-services application to bring multiple clients into standard database format.
- Responsible for analyzing repercussions of check fraud, primarily ramifications of stolen checks on banking account fees and transactions.

Education

Major State University, B.S., *Computer Science*

Appendix G

Job Applicant's Results of Situational Judgment Test, Demonstrating the Level of Person-Organization Fit

As part of the application process, your company has had applicants complete a Situational Judgment Test (SJT) to assess the match of an applicant's personal values to the core values of the organization (also known as Person-Organization Fit). The SJT presents to the applicants a set of five different situations; each associated with one of the company's core values (teamwork, respect, accountability, integrity, and innovation). Each situation is described in a short paragraph and followed by four possible courses of action. Job applicants are asked to choose the course of action they would most likely take and one they would least likely take in responding to the provided situation. Each response, matching hiring company's expectations of how the provided situation is handled, is scored as one point, making the maximum score to be equal to ten points.

Based on the results of the Situational Judgment Test, the reviewing job applicant has ____ (*two, five, or eight*) matches out of ten, possessing a ____ (*low, moderate, or high*) Person-Organization Fit with the hiring company.

Appendix H

Survey Question

Based on the provided information, would you invite the reviewed candidate to the job interview?

Yes No

Please elaborate on your decision:

Appendix I

Free-Form Text Responses per Treatment Group

Free-Form Elaboration Responses Sorted by Treatment Group and Invitation Response.

Treatment Group	Invitation	Elaboration
Control	Yes	The resume shows a good match to the job descriptions. However, only the interview will show if this candidate is really qualified.
Control	Yes	- experience leading other junior team members - experience with clients/users - consulting experience indicates adaptability I would probe experience cited in resume; very vague and full of clichés (e.g., "think out of box")
Control	Yes	It looks like that the candidate has enough experience and knowledge for this position. I would be interested to talk to him.
Control	Yes	I would invite him in and speak to him as he has done a lot in his background, he has a degree, and I would like to see how he presents, is he is a team player since this is part of the requirements, etc. Also, I may have something else that will be coming up shortly that he may be a good fit for.
Control	Yes	The resume of the candidate is strong enough to have him invited to the interview. The hiring decision will depend on how he actually responds face-to-face
Control	Yes	Overall I think the candidate is a good fit. Possible minor reservations are on apparent lack of .net and oracle experience, but job requirements indicated this as being desirable but not a requirement.
Control	Yes	The candidate clearly has experience with the required (or similar to the required) technologies. Whether they are truly competent or possess the leadership and collaborative traits required for the job, I can never really tell from resume. Not having other candidates to prioritize against or any kind of time constraint, this candidate is worth talking too. However, a

Treatment Group	Invitation	Elaboration
Control	Yes	<p>much more powerful influence on me would be if somebody I trusted told me that they had worked with or know of this candidate's work and recommended them.</p> <p>The candidate's resume seems to hit on the basic items outlined in the job description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- BS in Computer Science -- 9 years of experience in java and object oriented development - the last two as a senior engineer/team lead -- Candidate has experience with apache and web logic (although I cannot tell how proficient they are from resume) -- can't tell their dbase experience, would need to talk to them directly about that
Control	Yes	Since I only have one candidate and I need to get the spot filled, having one option is better than having no options.
Control	Yes	However, I would have concerns about the fact that he doesn't seem to last more than 3 years at a company.
Control	Yes	Although the individual does not have the specific desired experience regarding the specific technology being requested, this person has a computer science background, has shown the ability to work with large project teams, has led teams and has clearly done several years (about 5-6) worth of J2EE development.
Control	No	does not have the right experience
Low P-O Fit	Yes	Often times there are reasons why a candidate may or may not perform well on an SJT. If the fit in other areas is high, I would invite them to be interviewed, keeping in mind that they are not, according to their test result, an organizational fit. The interview would allow me to confirm that as a fact, or to reevaluate them based on their answers to similar questions in the interview. I would not mention to the candidate that they did not test well as an organizational fit.
Low P-O Fit	Yes	SJT results would not deter me. Personal observations and answers to interview questions are a better way to assess applicant values.
Low P-O Fit	Yes	As the recruiter, yes I would recommend to the hiring manager that they still proceed with at least a phone interview.

Treatment Group	Invitation	Elaboration
		<p>Personality tests, situational awareness and judgments tests are notoriously inaccurate.</p> <p>In fact, all forms of evaluating a candidate are at best 30-40% accurate as past performance is not indicative of future performance and most hiring manager rely on "gut feelings" when hiring a candidate.</p>
Low P-O Fit	No	<p>There are too many red-flags. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think that the candidate may be over qualified for the position. Based on the resume this person has not been a hands on developer in their last 2 jobs. They are either over-qualified or may not have the most to date hands-on skills. - seems to be a job jumper; length of service for each position did not exceed 3 years. - I am assuming the SJT has a proven track record where the score correlates to the success of the candidate. This score is very low. Combined with my other concerns/observations I do not think that this would be a viable candidate to take forward.
Low P-O Fit	No	He only matched on 2 of our core values.
Low P-O Fit	No	<p>My decision to not interview the candidate is based on the assumption that the situational test is fairly accurate, and that there exists a number of other candidates with equal technical skills who would score higher on the situational exam.</p> <p>Were that not the case, I would have no problem interviewing someone who has excellent technical skills, particularly if the need to fill the position was high.</p>
Low P-O Fit	No	Two out of ten seems to suggest that the person has the skills and experience but doesn't have the personal values that the organization seeks.
Low P-O Fit	No	Specific job-related skills can usually be taught or coached. However, it is usually much more difficult to teach or coach a fit with values and culture.
Low P-O Fit	No	Fitting in with the culture is just as important as technical skills and with such a low score it would not likely be a good fit.
Low P-O Fit	No	Scoring "low" (2 of 10) does not meet minimum standards, hence not considered for employment.
Low P-O Fit	No	The company is providing SJT; therefore, it is considered

Treatment Group	Invitation	Elaboration
Low P-O Fit	No	<p>important. Since the applicant scored very low on such test, I am not going to set aside the results and invite him anyway. On top of that, the resume, while certainly strong, is not earth-shattering. I am pretty sure that, given the economy, I can find similar candidates with better results on SJT</p>
Low P-O Fit	No	<p>Situational judgment results of 2/10 concerning</p> <p>Only meets minimum educational requirements in a field where there will be many candidates with higher educational accomplishments.</p> <p>Low match on the company mission questions is very powerful information. Working effectively within a team will be dependent on those broader values.</p> <p>No clear explanation or justification for job changes in past. Seems to have gone from finance to tech, then from large to small without explaining value of changes.</p>
Low P-O Fit	No	<p>Though applicant looks solid on paper, i.e. resume, based on situational questions, candidate potential behavior and attitude would not meet</p>
Low P-O Fit	No	<p>I believe Person-Organization Fit is as important as skill-set match.</p> <p>This candidate didn't work with people much in a Large and in a Medium-Sized companies, concentrating mostly on technical tasks there. Things are different in Start-up; the fact he interacts with co-workers and customers working in Start-up doesn't tell much about his personality, neither it shows his real communication and personal skills.</p> <p>However, it really depends on how many resumes I have and what other candidates are like. I might still ask him for a personal interview, if his resume is the best and other candidates didn't do well on SJT either. If there is nothing for me to choose on, I might ask some candidates to come for the personal interview even if SJT score was low and see for myself why the score of SJT test was that low. It might be a lack of experience, not a wrong personality.</p> <p>I would have a "May be" as a Survey Answer because it really depends on the situation in a Job Market. This candidate still may be not THAT bad, but why would I bother to check if I</p>

Treatment Group	Invitation	Elaboration
Low P-O Fit	No	have somebody better already? I think matching score is vital to creating a strong cohesive team. 2 out of 10 is not good enough
Medium P-O Fit	Yes	The applicant has a good skill set that matches the job description. He has experience with teams and 3 different organization sizes. 5 out of 10 values match is a little concerning. I would probably want a 7 or better, depending on the position. 5 is my lower threshold and I would invite him to interview, pending how he compares to other candidates in the pipeline.
Medium P-O Fit	Yes	Skills appeared to be present. The real judge of a fit with a company really depends on the interview.
Medium P-O Fit	Yes	I would invite the individual for an interview as I know that sometimes test do not accurately reflect the knowledge of the individual.
Medium P-O Fit	Yes	There is one missing fact - was there phone interview to confirm his skill set listed in resume? If we assume there was successful one I would invite him for another face to face because - 1. 5/10 is already not 0/10 2. SJT is not as precise as face to face evaluation 3. There are no ideal matches in a nature
Medium P-O Fit	Yes	If we had an open job for this position, he would likely be someone we would contact and arrange for a telephone screening call. If they passed initial screening, we would invite to interview. Resumes are not what get applicants their positions, they have to walk the walk and talk the talk and truly possess the experience, oral (and in some cases, written) skills to differentiate themselves from the crowd. I've interviewed hundreds of people over the years -- they all look good on paper and I would say out of a hundred people, there are probably 10% that are exceptional - the rest are average.
Medium P-O Fit	Yes	Without seeing how many "qualified" people are in the competition, it is difficult to rule out any relatively qualified candidate at this point. The candidate actually lacks the full 8

Treatment Group	Invitation	Elaboration
		<p>year requirement in Java, but Java has changed much, especially recently, and the experience he/she does have provides experience in the most recent Java modes. The candidate should have higher fit scores, but without knowing which areas are weak, or why, the mid score should be enough at least for a discussion interview. Again, if several other candidates are available who scored higher on the fit, I would probably eliminate this candidate.</p> <p>Note: I was once eliminated from a prospective job with Honeywell because I could answer correctly on too many job fit questions such as "What does the equation $E=Mc^2$ mean." The job was installing and repairing home and business alarm systems, and they felt I would be bored too quickly. They may have been right.</p>
Medium P-O Fit	No	I would look for someone with a better SJT score and more experience. Plus, this candidate has never held a job more than 3 years.
Medium P-O Fit	No	Selecting answers that match only 1/2 of the company's values doesn't indicate a good enough "fit".
Medium P-O Fit	No	<p>While the candidate appears to have the technical qualifications matching the required job skills, the "moderate" person-organization match on the values test indicates that there may be a mismatch. Of course a variety of factors might alter my decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The validity of the person-organizational values test. Has it been validated, for instance, by comparing those who are "successful" in the organization to their test scores? Has it been a good predictor of individuals' success in the organization? b) The results of this test for other candidates who possess the required skills c) The size of the pool of qualified candidates.
Medium P-O Fit	No	Concerning SJT results along with an average resume.
Medium P-O Fit	No	The decision is hard to make without knowing a number of other external factors not discussed in the situation. How urgent is it for this position to be filled? What is the state of the job

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		<p>market? How many people with the technical and leadership qualifications have also applied for this same position? How accurately do the Person-Organization Fit surveys determine the likelihood that a candidate actually aligns with the company's values?</p> <p>Assuming the external factors discussed do not matter for the purposes of this survey and that the Person-Organization Fit survey accurately measures "fit," I would answer as follows. While the candidate seemed to possess the technical skills required to complete the job at a satisfactory level, I feel that the candidate's Person-Organization Fit leaves a little to be desired. An onsite interview does require additional resources on the part of the company and for that reason, it would be prudent to find an individual who is better aligned with the company's values. Based on the number of job applicants we currently have in the queue, I do not believe we will have any issues filling the position with a highly qualified candidate.</p>
High P-O Fit	Yes	<p>Although he only has 7 years of experience, he has a team leader experience and is still young enough to mold into the position that you want him for. He has the skill set you require and 8 out of 10 is a very good high probability. He is definitely worth taking a closer look at.</p>
High P-O Fit	Yes	<p>In my experience, candidates that fit this closely to my desired expectations are hard to find and the rest of the evaluation would have to be</p>
High P-O Fit	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applicant scored high on the SJT, which indicates a good match for the company. 2. Resume shows professional achievement and progression in skills and responsibilities.
High P-O Fit	Yes	<p>The candidates experiences matches the job requirements very closely. In addition to that, the fact that the candidate had a very high score on</p>
High P-O Fit	Yes	<p>Candidate has appropriate education and work experience for described position and high score from the test</p>
High P-O Fit	Yes	<p>Solid technical background, strong values fit, evidence of working well with others (nine projects lead team).</p>

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High P-O Fit	Yes	candidate has much of the technical skills and showed progressive experience in leadership roles. Combined with high work ethic attributes, makes this candidate worthwhile to interview
High P-O Fit	Yes	Good work history, candidate meets the min quals.: min of a BA, 8+ years of exp 2 of which is Team Lead over a sizable team, has exp with Apache (recent hist.), & web logic (far bk. in hist.) has both Java & J2EE, looks like he has light oracle, no SQL but may be strong enough as an overall candidate. In addition to meeting the min quals., he is also a "high fit" per the Personal Organizational assessment. An interview would be great for a closer assessment of his skill set and culture fit.
High P-O Fit	Yes	The applicant's resume has presented enough information and experience to warrant an interview. There were no gross lapses in qualifications. Further investigation during the interview could satisfy any further questions about readiness for job.
High P-O Fit	Yes	I think that the person posses technical and personal skills matching to the requirements. A technical interview is required to assess depth of J2EE knowledge and understanding.
High P-O Fit	Yes	I would verify the eight of ten matching and discuss the two that did not match
High P-O Fit	No	I don't know which two questions the candidate didn't answer the desired way.
High P-O Fit	No	Resume looks *very* generic, nothing really jumps out at me. Was obviously not tailored to the job. Things missing from resume: - Information supporting claims in "Qualification Section" e.g. there were no examples of how candidate thought outside the box. - No mention of mentoring other programmers - no o/s level experience - no web server technology experience
High P-O Fit	No	Resume too general. Cookie cutter!
High P-O Fit	No	Mismatch between Job Description and Resume experience section.