

An evaluation of the recruitment and selection process employed by “Manufacturing Company X” and assessing whether a more advanced process or method of recruitment and selection may reduce staff turnover

Daryl Quinn

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the
MA in Human Resource Management

**Submitted to the National College of Ireland
September 2014**

Abstract

Heading: An evaluation of the recruitment and selection process employed by Manufacturing Company X in assessing whether a more advanced process or method of recruitment and selection may reduce staff turnover

Author: Daryl Quinn

Purpose: This research dissertation looks to explore the recruitment and selection process employed by a manufacturing company and look at other recruitment and selection alternatives which the Manufacturing Company could use to try and reduce their staff turnover.

Approach: The researcher distributed questionnaires among the recruiters and the employees in order to get feedback on how the recruitment process worked, what the job entailed, and what type of person would be the right fit for this Manufacturing Company. The researcher also observed the general operatives at work, and carried out some exit interviews to assess why people were leaving their positions.

The researcher also looked at alternative recruitment and selection processes the Manufacturing Company could use.

Findings: The researcher found some issues with the current recruitment and selection process. The returned questionnaires clearly pointed out problems which the Manufacturing Company must address. The researcher gave some recommendations as to how the Manufacturing Company can improve their current process, and hopefully reduce their staff turnover.

Keywords: Recruitment and Selection, Manufacturing, Job Analysis, Job Specification, Person Specification, Classic Trio, Application forms, Interviewing, References, Work samples, Assessment centres, Exit Interviews.

Declaration

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland
Research Students Declaration Form
(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

Name: Daryl Quinn

Student Number: 13116509

Degree for which thesis is submitted: MAHRM

Material submitted for award

- (a) I declare that the work has been composed by myself.
 - (b) I declare that all verbatim extracts contained in the thesis have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged.
 - (c) My thesis will be included in electronic format in the College Institutional Repository TRAP (thesis reports and projects)
 - (d) *Either* *I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.
- Or* *I declare that the following material contained in the thesis formed part of a submission for the award of

(State the award and the awarding body and list the material below)

Signature of research student: 

Date: 25 - August - 2014.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation, and the whole course has been one of the most challenging undertakings I have ever had to complete, and it is for that reason I would to take this opportunity to thank a number of people who have supported me throughout the course of this tough year.

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Rachel Doherty, and all the staff of the National College of Ireland who offered me great assistance and support throughout my time at the College.

I would also like to thank, Frank, the HR Manager of the company I did my research on, your time, help and guidance was greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten.

I would like to thank my close friends, my two sisters, Laura and Megan, and Hazel for your support throughout the year, your proof reading, and for allowing me somewhere to go to forget about it all when it was required.

I would like to thank my close classmates, Stephen, Ste, Elaine, Rachelle and Jade for all your help and support throughout the year, a Masters is a hard thing to take on, but when you make new friendships as strong as ours it makes the whole experience a lot easier- “Started from the bottom now we’re here”

Finally I would like to thank my parents for everything; you have been a source of constant drive throughout both my degree and especially this Masters. You have never left me wanting, and have always been there whenever I have needed anything. Without your support I would not, and could not have made it to here!

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	7
1.1 Motivation behind this study	8
1.2 Broad outline of the study	9
1.3 Brief overview of findings	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review	11
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.2 Recruitment and Selection	12
2.3 Wastage/Labour Turnover	13
2.4 Job Analysis and Design.....	15
2.5 Competitive Advantage	18
2.6 Classic Trio	19
2.6.1 Application Forms/ C.V's.....	19
2.6.2 Interviews.....	21
2.6.3 References.....	23
2.7 Work Samples.....	24
2.8 Assessment Centres	26
2.9 Exit Interviews.....	27
2.10 Literature Review Conclusion	29
Chapter 3: Aims and Objectives	30
3.1 Research Question	31

3.2 Aims and Objectives	31
3.3 Significance.....	32
3.4 Process of the research.....	32
Chapter 4: Methodology	33
4.1 Introduction.....	34
4.2 Research Philosophy and Approach	34
4.3 Research Strategy, Design and Methodology	35
4.4 Data Collection Methods	36
4.4.1 Questionnaire Design.....	37
4.4.2 Questionnaire Administration.....	37
4.5 Data Analysis	38
4.5.1 Questionnaires.....	38
4.5.2 Observation	38
4.5.3 Exit Interviews	39
4.6 Sampling	39
4.7 Ethical Considerations	40
4.8 Limitations	40
Chapter 5: Research Findings and Analysis	42
5.1 Introduction.....	43
5.2 Research Findings.....	43
5.2.1 Recruiters Questionnaire.....	43

5.2.2 Employees Questionnaire	48
5.2.3 Observation	51
5.2.4 Exit Interviews	54
5.3 Research Analysis	54
5.3.1 Recruitment and Selection	54
5.3.2 Job Specification	56
5.3.3 Person Specification	56
Chapter 6: Discussion	58
6.1 Introduction	59
6.2 Discussion	59
Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations	62
7.1 Introduction	63
7.2 Conclusion	63
7.2 Recommendations	65
Reference List	66
Appendices	72
Recruiters Questionnaire	73
Employees Questionnaire	79

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Motivation behind this study

The object of this dissertation is to assess the recruitment and selection process of the Manufacturing Company X and assess if another method or process of recruitment and selection would reduce their staff turnover. This study will be very beneficial to both the Manufacturing Company and the researcher. As the Manufacturing company have already identified that they have a problem with staff turnover, and suspect it may be related to their recruitment and selection process, this study will identify any issues they may have, and could make suggestions as to how to improve their recruitment and selection process. The researcher is aware that the role of a human resource manager has constantly changed over the past number of years, but that one thing which has remained ever present is the need for HR to be involved in the recruitment and selection of staff at all levels within an organisation. With this in mind, this study is a great opportunity for the researcher to explore different theories on recruitment and selection, and identify possible recruitment and selection processes which would be effective for Manufacturing Companies.

Recruitment and selection is one of the few activities which every organisation in every industry, sector and region is involved in at some stage. However, just because every organisation must practice recruitment and selection does not mean that all organisations understand just how important your recruitment and selection practices are on the overall running of the organisation- and more importantly your organisations bottom line. The right recruitment and selection process can have many advantages to an organisation- it firstly looks to identify new talent which can fill the position available (Armstrong, 2010), but it can also be used as a way of gaining a competitive advantage through people, which is not easy for other companies to copy (Grant, 1991). Getting your recruitment and selection process wrong can have a major impact on an organisations bottom line- a combination of the money invested in the process, combined with the time spent possibly training the new staff, is high enough, without having to do it constantly due to not being able to identify the right person the first time around (Froschheiser, 2008) (Turner, 2010).

This research will therefore seek to understand the factors which influence the selection and recruitment process and in doing so will provide insight both from an academic perspective but also to practitioners seeking to improve their internal recruitment and selection process.

This researcher hopes that through doing this study he will be able to gain an insight into the many different recruitment and selection techniques that organisations have available to them in today's fast paced business environment.

1.2 Broad outline of the study

The researcher first conducted a literature review in order to establish a clear understanding of the theories behind recruitment and selection, along with identifying the numerous approaches available to organisations.

The research adopted for this dissertation was that of a mixed methods approach. This researcher used questionnaires, observation and interviews to gain a greater understanding of how the recruitment and selection practices were being carried out, and help identify any positives and negatives applicable to the organisations current process- especially things which may contribute to staff turnover.

This dissertation has been broken down into a number of chapters. The next chapter, chapter two, contains the literature review which investigates the theory behind recruitment and selection. Chapter three outlines this researches different aims and objectives of this dissertation. Chapter four, research methodology, outlines the different factors which need to be considered when conducting research, it also identifies the research approach this researcher will be taking and why. Chapter five deals with the findings and analyse of the research. Finally, Chapter six deals with the discussion of linking of the findings to the literature review, looks at the overall conclusions, and gives some recommendations.

1.3 Brief overview of findings

The literature review of this dissertation addresses the need for organisations to have a structured approach to recruitment and selection regardless of the level of staff required. It outlines why an organisation should look to identify exactly what the vacant position is, and who is needed to fill it. It also looks into the competitive advantage organisations can gain through getting the right person into the right job.

The practical side of the research looks into how the organisation are carrying out there recruitment and selections- looking at whether they actually follow their own outlined process, or what way the recruitment and selection process is actually conducted. It looks to

discover if there is a link between the turnover rate and the recruitment system and identify if another recruitment and selection method was employed, could turnover be reduced.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The notion of what Recruitment and Selection is, and how it should be done has constantly changed over the past number of years- From Smith and Robertson (1986) to Woodruffe (1993) to O'Reilly and Pfeffer (2000) to Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006) to the most up to date in Taylor (2010), Armstrong (2010) and Gunnigle (2011)- lots of different people have weighed in with their opinions on how organisations can improve their recruitment and selection methods. The idea of recruitment and selection was once just to fill the vacant position as soon as possible and forget about it again but this has changed dramatically- with hundreds of people exploring this area in the hope to find the perfect method. The object of this chapter is to review the literature on recruitment and selection- looking at the wastage or labour turnover organisations can typically expect, the job analysis or designs which may need to be conducted or drawn up, to the competitive advantage a company can obtain, to the processes they can use to recruit and select employees. It will then look at the different recruitment and selection processes the Manufacturing Company could use, be it the classic trio, work samples or even assessment centres. Finally it will look at the theories on exit interviews, and how organisations can use them to improve their business.

2.2 Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and selection methods have changed and opinions have evolved over the course of time. It was once the policy to fill the position as quickly as possible but as time has progressed organisations have realised that the recruitment and selection methods they employee can have serious effects on how the organisation operates, and thus the turnover the organisation makes. "Attracting and recruiting the best employees is critical to success in all sectors and to all types of organisations, regardless of size" (Cullen & Farrelly, 2005, p. 41). Froschheiser (2008) has claimed that putting the wrong person into the wrong position just to fill it can have dire consequences to your organisation, it may cause poor employee morale, low productivity and lost opportunities- all of which will have a negative impact on your organisations bottom line. As a result of this there is increasing pressure on organisations to ensure that they implement the best recruitment and selection method applicable to their organisation or industry otherwise they risk becoming uncompetitive. Turner (2010) backs this up with this when he claims that the success of any organisation depends on its ability to get the right people, in the right place at the right time.

Many authors who have studied recruitment and selection have agreed that there is a distinct difference between recruitment and selection. Taylor (2008) and Rees and French (2010) say that recruitment is the process whereby an organisation collects applications for a position and generates a pool of potential suitable employees, while selection involves using techniques or different methods to assess the applicants and decide who is best suited to the available position, given management goals and legal requirements.

2.3 Wastage/Labour Turnover

During the course of any work year it can be expected that organisations are going to lose a certain amount of staff, and in turn these people must be replaced in order to maintain the normal levels of service/production. This is viewed as natural wastage or attrition and can be referred to as labour turnover. People can leave for a number of different reasons, (retirement, better opportunity elsewhere, job dissatisfaction, dismissal etc.) but it is vital that the organisation is aware of this and is able to predict a rate of turnover and keep it as low as possible so as to reduce spending in the recruitment process. One way of doing this is through conducting labour turnover analysis. A recent IBEC study found that the current labour turnover rate for Ireland is just over 6% and the labour turnover rate within the manufacturing industry is just below 3% (IBEC, 2013).

Industry	No. of cases	Average	Median	Lower quartile	Upper quartile
<i>Employee turnover rate for 2012</i>					
Food, drink and tobacco	16	5.24%	4.23%	1.41%	5.63%
Chemical and pharmaceutical	15	3.39%	1.52%	0.00%	5.49%
Medical devices	23	4.77%	5.20%	1.45%	7.18%
Metals and engineering	14	4.30%	2.39%	0.00%	7.50%
Electronics (hardware & software)	11	1.93%	1.79%	0.00%	3.92%
Rubber and plastics	12	4.97%	3.23%	1.19%	4.81%
Other manufacturing	29	2.74%	2.50%	0.00%	3.97%
Distribution (retail & wholesale)	34	7.75%	4.93%	0.70%	9.80%
Financial services	31	7.96%	5.46%	0.00%	10.20%
Electronic services	19	11.41% **	5.49%	0.00%	14.12%
Other services	29	7.25%	4.00%	0.00%	12.50%
TOTAL	233	6.02%	3.70%	0.00%	8.00%

(IBEC, 2013).

The manufacturing company this research is doing his study on currently has a 7% turnover rate for general operatives, a figure which is much higher than the average for the country. A

high turnover rate like this will cause the manufacturing company to spend a lot of money on recruitment- money which could be used elsewhere if there turnover rate was lower.

As this type of index does not show the complete story for organisations it can be a good idea for companies to carry out exit interviews in order to try and find reasons for their current labour turnover. The purpose of an exit interview is to provide the organisation with reasons as to why their employees are leaving. The information recovered from these exit interviews can provide the organisation with vital information and opinions on various different things done within the organisation. Hill and Trist (1955) conducted a number of land mark studies of labour turnover and developed a model which has become known as the “survival curve”. Evidence collected from their study suggests people are a lot more likely to quit their job in the early stages of recruitment (first 6 weeks) than they are if they survive this period. The survival curve has three distinct phases-

Phase one is known as the “induction crisis” phase- this is the period where labour turnover can be very high. This turnover could be applicable to many different things, but the three most common are:

- Not matching expectations – the employee had a different image of what he/she would be doing- it is possible that they misunderstood the job, or the job specification was wrong, or explained incorrectly during the recruitment stage.
- Adapting- some new employees may find it hard to adapt to their new surrounding and thus may not like the job- these surroundings could be the people, the culture, the actual job itself.
- A “better” job- the new employee may have applied for many jobs before joining and something they view as better or more suitable may have come along since joining so they leave the company for the other position.

Phase two is the “differential transit” phase- This is where the “new” employee has adapted to their work surroundings and is now happy and feels a part of the culture and community- at this stage it is very unlikely that a person will suddenly decide to leave the organisation.

Phase three is the “settled connection” phase- it is at this stage that Hill and Trist (1955) believe that the person has been in the job so long they are now viewed as “quasi permanent”. This person now views themselves as part of the furniture- these people are of the opinion that it will be more beneficial for them to stay where they are rather than go anywhere else.

The survival curve is in many ways indicative, rather than definite but there are indications that organisations can use as a way of predicting future labour turnover (Hill & Trist, 1955).

Through analysing at what stage of the survival curve people are leaving the organisation the organisation may be able to pin point why people are leaving- is it a recruitment issue or is it a culture or community issue. The manufacturing company this researcher is conducting his research on have said that on a few occasions over the last 12 months they have hired a person and this person has left soon afterwards- assessing for what reason these people have left may lead to an improvement in the recruitment system, or may pin point a problem within the culture where people are not welcomed easily.

2.4 Job Analysis and Design

Once the Human Resource manager has identified that the organisation needs new staff it is important for them to conduct a job analysis in order to identify the job design so they can recruit a person who is suitable for the position. Froschheiser (2008) highlights the fact that following national survey results it was found that “over 30% of CEO’s said that up to half of their employees are a poor fit for their job” (2008, p.30). In order to prevent this the HR manager must know what is entailed to do the job successfully, without knowing exactly what is required the wrong candidate could easily get the job. Pilbeam & Corbridge (2006, p146) define job analysis as the “systematic process of collecting information about the tasks, responsibilities and contexts of the job”. Many researchers including McMahon & O’Carroll (1999) and Pilbeam & Corbridge (2006) have agreed that there are many functions to a successful job analysis- it can be used not only in “recruitment but also selection, performance appraisal, training and development, job evaluation and health and safety” (McMahon & O’Carroll, 1999, p. 117). When a person actually carries out a job analysis they are essentially doing a form of research as they must collect many pieces of data so they can identify exactly what skills, knowledge and capabilities are required to do the job effectively. The job analysis can be carried out independently or jointly by a HR manager or a general manager, this will all depend on how complex the job is, and what way the job analysis is going to be undertaken. No matter who it is carrying out the analysis there are many different ways a person can collect the information they need- they can speak to and/or observe the person doing the job, talk to supervisors or managers and also conduct exit interviews when people leave. The manufacturing company this researcher is working with have not carried

out a job analysis in six years, yet they have continued recruiting and are aware that the job has changed during this period due to advances in technology.

Following the job analysis, the job description should essentially be “a broad statement of the purpose, scope, duties and responsibilities that are attached to the job and as such is the basis for the contract of employment” (Gunnigle, et al., 2011, p. 106). Through doing a job analysis and creating a job description it will be clear exactly what the new employee would be needed for- through this the management can assess whether there is a need for a new employee or whether a current employee could do this job or if a current employee is supposed to be doing this job. Gunnigle et al, (2011, p. 106) says there are roughly 10 aspects to a job description:

1. Job Title
2. Department
3. Location
4. Reports to
5. Purpose
6. Main Tasks
7. Liaison and Main Contacts
8. Staff Responsibilities
9. Special Features
10. Reward and Conditions

Currently the job description in the manufacturing company is very broad, and covers the employee’s duties and a responsibility, however, this job description is quite old, and so may need updating.

The next section of the job analysis is to conduct a person specification- this will provide the organisation with list of skills, knowledge and capabilities the candidates will need in order to do the job as effectively and efficiently as possible. Two authors who have developed fairly similar frameworks to help assist recruiters to find the best candidates are Rodger (1952) and Munro-Fraser (1954).

Rogers (1952) seven point plan is made up of the following components:

1. Physical make up: health, appearance, bearing and speech
2. Attainments: education, qualifications, experience

3. General intelligence: intellectual capacity
4. Special aptitudes: mechanical, manual dexterity, facility in use of words and figures
5. Interests: intellectual, practical, constructional, physically active, social, artistic
6. Disposition: acceptability, influence over others, steadiness, dependability, self-reliance
7. Circumstances: any special demands of the job

While Munro-Frasers (1954) five-fold grading system consists of these similar components:

1. Impact on others: physical make-up appearance, speech and manner
2. Acquired qualifications: education, vocational training, work experience
3. Innate abilities: quickness of comprehension and aptitude for learning
4. Motivation: individual goals, consistency and determination in following them up
5. Adjustments: emotional stability, ability to stand up to stress and ability to get on with people

(as cited in Beardwell & Holden, 2001, p. 236)

While these frameworks are commonly referenced, one must be very careful when following them as some of the points have become out of date. If we are to look at point 5 and 6 in Rogers seven point plan one must ask themselves if these points actually matter- how do you pin point the precise interests or dispositions a person should have to do a certain job? As is clear in everyday life- people are different- we come in all different shapes and sizes with different emotions and definitely different interests- a person cannot and should not be told they can or can't do a certain job just because they are interested in one thing and not another. Also Rogers first point- the reference to the physical "make-up" of candidates are issues which open the opportunity for grounds of discrimination in the 1998-2008 Equality Act in Ireland- a lawsuit an organisation definitely don't want brought against them. Then in Munro-Frazer's fivefold grading system points 3, 4 and 5 appear to be what we describe as competencies people can possess in today's world- again outdated. This researcher was quite surprised that there has not been an updated study in this area and that the majority of references in this area all related back to frameworks from the 1950's, frameworks which are 60 years old- frameworks which are clearly outdated and need revision. With this, this researcher must ask the question as to whether these frameworks should actually be followed at all? However, although these frameworks are undoubtedly gone past their sell by date it is the general consensus that if an organisation does create a job and person specification it will increase their chances of being free of bias and discrimination. According to Beardwell and

Holden (2001, p.237) “preconceived or entrenched attitudes, prejudices and assumptions can lead, consciously or unconsciously, to requirements that are less job-related than aimed at meeting the assumed needs of customers, colleagues or the established culture of the organisation”. Thus, through doing job analysis and creating job specifications, organisations can help prevent such assumptions. At this moment in time the manufacturing company does not have a person specification, from the analyses of this research, this researcher will advise whether or not he believes a person specification is necessary for a general operative in this manufacturing company.

Before the recruitment and selection process begins it is important that the organisation identifies exactly who is going to be involved in the recruitment process and ensures they are up to date with the job and person specification which has been made. This is so that when the recruiter begins the recruitment process he/she is aware of exactly what they are hiring for, and what type of person they need.

2.5 Competitive Advantage

The more successful the human resource planning and organising of your recruitment and selection methods is, the greater competitive advantage an organisation can obtain. Fitz-enz (1995, p.45) said “it is commonly acknowledged that people are the key assets in the new world market and that all other assets are rather more commodities that can be purchased at market prices, because only the human asset has potential to learn, grow, and contribute to sustainable economic development” (as cited in Vokić & Vidović, 2008). As “we do live in a world in which knowledge, rather than physical capital, is increasingly important, we need smart people who can do great things—increase productivity, build new products and services—and do so even more quickly” (O' Reilly & Pfeffer, 2000). This is very relevant in the manufacturing industry as technology is constantly being update to try and improve and speed up processes. Achieving a competitive advantage over your competition can be very hard as unless the new product or idea is complex it could be easily copied, so the more talented your workforce is the bigger advantage you have. Grant (1991) agrees with this when he says “the firm’s most important resources and capabilities are those which are durable, difficult to identify and understand, imperfectly transferable, not easily replicated and in which the firm possesses clear ownership and control” (as cited in Armstrong, 2010, p.480). As people are unique- it’s often said no two people are the exact same- people can prove to be the greatest form of competitive advantage as everyone has their own thoughts,

ideas and opinions, put together with various backgrounds, qualifications and life experiences is guaranteed to produce different abilities, skills and endless opportunities for organisations to find new ideas, should they can just find a way to tap into it. It is for this reason why organisations must spend lots of time assessing their recruitment and selection policies and procedures to ensure they are always getting the most talented individual available for the open position- it is the opinion of this researcher that it doesn't matter if you are looking for a brain surgeon, an accountant, a guard, a bar-tender, a sports athlete, a HR manager or a general operative- the more skilful, driven and intelligent the person you can find for this position the greater competitive advantage you can create.

2.6 Classic Trio

The classic trio is a term which was first composed by Cook (2004) when he referred to one of the most favoured forms of recruitment and selection- an application form/C.V combined with at least one interview and additional references. A CIPD report in 2003 showed that 80% of organisations used some form of the classic trio. This is despite the fact that authors such as Jenkins, Smith and Robertson, and Van Iddekinge believe there are issues with the classic trio and other writers such as Callinan and Robertson, and Winter believe there are better and more reliable forms of recruitment and selection (work samples or assessment centres), which can predict with a lot higher accuracy the suitability of different candidates to different jobs.

2.6.1 Application Forms/ C.V's

Application forms/ Curriculum Vitae (C.V) is the first part of the classic trio. "This recruitment tool has become so much a part of the recruitment custom that it is wholly expected by candidates and taken for granted by most recruiters" (Roberts, 2005, p. 103). A survey carried out by the CIPD (2003) discovered that an application form of some sort is used by 80% of people when applying for jobs. In the public sector especially, application forms appear to be used for every job excluding senior management positions, while in the private sector the alternative is to allow people to compose their own curriculum vitae or c.v. Many employers actually make use of both approaches, accepting c.v's along with application forms (as cited in Taylor, 2008, p. 258).

When an organisation opts to use C.V's they are essentially giving each candidate the opportunity to sell themselves to the best of their ability as people can design their C.V whatever way they like (Taylor, 2008). "Some recruiters prefer to use this method as it

demonstrates the ability of the candidate to marshal their thoughts and put together a clear piece of communication” (Roberts, 2005, p. 103). Taylor argues that this is not great practise though as it gives applicants the opportunity to contaminate their C.V. This can happen when a C.V is “attractively presented or structured, leading unwary selectors, perhaps unconsciously, to favour applications from otherwise unimpressive candidates over those of their better qualified rivals” (Taylor, 2008, p. 259). Jenkins (1983) says that CV’s can be ineffective because they allow applicants to promote their stronger points and thus hide their weaknesses and things that may concern the organisation (Jenkins, 1983). By doing this a person who has very little to offer the organisation can find ways to hide this and thus get themselves hired for a job they are both, not suited to, and not able to do. As a C.V can hold a lot of information there is plenty of scope for people to be untruthful, as it is unlikely that the organisation will check all, if any of the information, as validating all c.v’s could take up far too much time.

An application form is a form an organisation supplies to each candidate which consists of a number of questions the organisation feel are necessary to be answered so they can make a judgement on your application. Each question will generally have a maximum word count and thus organisations are looking for your most concise answer. Numerous authors have ridiculed application forms as a recruitment and selection tool. One major flaw is that organisations often use the same application form for many different positions rather than creating an application form which questions the skills, competencies and knowledge required for the advertised position. Taylor (2008, p.259) suggests “the best solution is to design separate application forms for each vacancy advertised”. Again, these application forms can easily be lied on as organisations don’t have the time or the money to waste on validating all of the claims people make in them.

Roberts (2005), identifies the application form as being the first part of the selection process, but points out that it is merely a tool which is usually used to screen applicants. Although an application form is viewed as an easy thing to fill out Roberts (2005) does acknowledge that some manual workers will struggle to fill these out and they are not accustomed to filling out official forms. Smith and Robertson (1993) question the validity of application forms also- they query if all the information is true and or relevant for the organisation. Smith and Robertson (1993) believe that management should be able to put different people into different groups. Having read the applications management should be able to categorise

people and draw up a short list of “good” applicants. However, this is not the case in a lot of manufacturing firms and management can end up having hundreds of different application forms which they have no way of categorising because all the questions are so broad, and time constraints prevent them from examining them in depth. Some authors have suggested that online application forms may be the solution to this problem as management could look for specific information which could allow them to pin point the competencies the candidate possesses, in fact, this is actually already being done in some large organisations in America, however, this researcher has been unsuccessful in finding previous research which actually informs us on whether these online applications are of any use other than reducing the clutter of application forms from around the office.

One thing is clear from all the literature in this area, an application form is worth nothing unless it has been designed to tease out the competencies required to do the job which is being advertised. If the application form is not job specific then it may leave management with a lot of paper which gives them little information, and no form of comparison.

Currently the manufacturing company do not have an application form, candidates merely send their c.v’s in and when the recruitment process starts they will analyse the c.v’s which they have collected in the office. This may be an area that can be improved on as currently they do not have a system of comparison from one person to the next, so applying an application form to their recruitment procedure may help find the right people.

2.6.2 Interviews

Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006, p.179) describe interviews as “a social encounter between an applicant and a representative of an employer and personalises the recruitment and selection process”. Van Iddekinge et al (2004) says that for an interview to be effective the information obtained must satisfy the conditions of reliability and validity. A reliable test is a test which gives reliable measurements at different times and in indifferent circumstances. Interviews cannot always be seen as reliable as a person is trying to measure the human characteristics of the candidate, and each interviewer may interpret the information obtained differently. A valid test is considered to be a test that measures exactly what it is set out to measure. An interview cannot not necessarily be said to be valid as it is trying to measure the employee’s suitability to a job just through talking (Van Iddekinge, et al., 2004).

Roberts (2005) claims there are two forms an interview can take, a structured form which focus' on clearly defined questions or an unstructured form which is effectively a chat or discussion which could lead anywhere. According to Barclay (1999) structured interviews have a higher level of success than that of unstructured interviews as the interview process is more focused and job specific, also the information gathered can be compared against other applicants as all applicants are being assessed the same way. Taylor (2008) expresses beliefs that unstructured interviews are not as effective or easily used as each person is being asked different questions and thus comparison can be very difficult and it will be hard to assess potential candidates fairly and so the perfect fit for the job may be overlooked.

Where interviews are viewed as one of the main recruitment and selection tools, organisations must ensure that their interviewer is as unbiased as possible as it is a common belief that “interviewers have a tendency to make up their minds within the first few minutes of the interview and the remainder of the time is spent confirming these first impressions” (Pilbeam & Corbridge, 2006, p. 179). Some people believe it is essential to interview as “only by these means can they discover whether the applicant is likely to fit in to the organisation – whether others like him or her and will work well together” (Herriot, 1992, p. 435).

Taylor (2008) believes that the use of hypothetical questions or scenarios can improve the reliability of an interview as peoples attributes will be easier to see as they talk about doing a certain aspect of the job. Armstrong (2010) appears to disagree with this form of method as he claims the best way to make judgements on a client is to ask them how they worked or would work, through a certain situation should it arise rather than using hypothetical situations.

Throughout the years there have been some criticisms expressed regarding how effective interviewing actually is, but findings from a survey carried out by the CIPD have shown that it remains the most popular recruitment tool employed by managers from all industries and sectors (as cited in Taylor 2008). It is a recruitment practice which applicants generally expect to be put through, and it is a method organisations generally like to use as it is a relatively low cost to carry out one to one interviews (Taylor, 2008).

Wood and Payne (1998) argue that structured interviews have many advantages. Jackson (2000) collaborates when he says that structured interviews are a huge improvement on

unstructured interviews. This is because they ask and rate each applicant using the same questions and the same set of behavioural responses makes them much more reliable and comparable than the responses of traditional unstructured interviews. Structured interviews also allow the recruiter to build his interview around the requirements of the job having looked at the job and/or person specifications. Fletcher (1996) still questions the reliability of interviews as he claims applicants can pre-rehearse interviews and get the ideal answers from many places (books or the internet), thus coning the interviewer.

Cottrell (2012) says that interviewing efficiently and effectively requires the interviewers to know exactly what they are looking for, moving the candidates from topic to topic until all parties are satisfied that questions have been asked and answered completely. This is the way in which a successful interviewer will try and conduct an interview so that they have a mean of comparing one candidate from the next. Cottrell (2012, p. 105) also points out that organisations, and HR managers should “not be afraid to give up the appearance of power in favour of the benefits brought by placing the interview facilitation duties in the hands of a person with talents along this vein will result in leaner operations”. The more talented the interviewer, the better chance the organisation has of employing the best candidate as the recruiter knows exactly what they are doing. Pendlebury (1970) agrees with this, but adds that- trained interviewers are better at interviewing than untrained interviewers as interviewing skills can be acquired. He also adds that a “good interviewer needs to be detached and objective in his assessments and not allow himself to be unduly swayed by possibly irrelevant factors” (Pendlebury, 1970, p. 144). Poor interviewing techniques may cause the recruiters to select the wrong candidate which can have many effects on the organisation.

2.6.3 References

The third part of the classic trio is references. Suff (2008) believes employers are unsure when it comes to references and their effectiveness. “As a predictor of job performance the reference letter has low validity, and has often been found to say more about its author than about its subject” (Taylor, 2008, p. 281). Suff (2008) agrees with this when she says that employers believe referencing to be of a low level of validity as former employers will very rarely give negative feedback and a great deal of the information provided is opinion based and often has little to do with the candidates actual suitability for the job. Cooper et al (2003) also appear to agree with this as they suggest that referencing is highly subjective. Their

research showed that employers are inclined to give all former employees good or fair references, regardless of how they actually performed. Their research also shows that managers put very little thought or effort into referencing. However, Dunn (1995) disagrees and believes that referencing can be useful as it gives a good insight into the character of the candidate. Dunn believes that by using referees an organisation should be able to reduce their staff turnover and increase productivity as you get a clear indication of the person from their previous job.

Tahan and Kleiner (2001) claim there is a massive problem with pre-employment referencing as the previous employer must be careful about what they say for legal reasons. It is their opinion that the previous employer will not say anything which may be bad about their former employee in fear that that person may not get the job because of what they have said and they may face some form of legal action (e.g a slander claim). The previous employer is also afraid to over sell the applicant as if they get the job and the person under performs the prospective employer may launch legal action claiming they supplied false information. Thus Tahan and Kleiner believe this has led to a “no comment” culture, and so damaged the referencing tool.

Drysdale et al (2010) said that referencing is now an important tool for screening which is available to the prospective employer; this is because referencing now contains things like character references, educational and qualification verifications and criminal record checks via Garda vetting. Thus through using referencing you can validate the applicant and reduce some uncertainty from the recruitment and selection process.

Currently the Manufacturing Company don't put a lot of regard on references, and had admitted that they will only check a reference if something stage can up in the interview, other than this, they take each candidate at their word.

2.7 Work Samples

“Work samples present applicants with a set of tasks or exercises that are nearly identical to those performed on the job” (Ployhart, 2006, p. 880). This will allow the prospective employer to assess the applicants on an area relevant to the position they are applying for. Callinan and Robertson (2000) have said that this is one of the best selection methods to predict future job performance and it is one of the fairest recruitment and selection methods as each person has an equal opportunity to impress.

Asher and Sciarrino (1984) have identified two types of work sample test- motor and verbal tests. Motor tests refer to the physical manipulation of things. An example in relation to this researchers study would be if the applicant was brought to the production floor and asked to carry out a typical task which they would be required to do if they got the job. Verbal tests refer to problem situations and explaining what you would do. In relation to a manufacturing plant you could give a hypothetical situation the applicant may find themselves in and ask them what they would do.

Robertson and Kandola (1987) have come up with their own four category system of work sample tests. These consist of psychomotor, job related information, individual situational decision making and group discussions/decision making. Psychomotor is similar to the motor tests outlined by Asher and Sciarrino (1974) in that these tests also refer to the manipulation of objects. Job related tests examine exactly what information a person knows about an area- these are standard paper and pencil tests where the person will be able to show off their knowledge of the area. Individual situational decision making tests are similar to the verbal tests outlined by Asher and Sciarrino (1974) as they both present hypothetical situations and ask how you would respond. The final test is group discussions/decision making test, this is where two or more people are put together and told to discuss a particular topic- their performance in the discussion is then evaluated. These tests would be used where a person's contribution within a group setting is seen as very important.

Within work samples applicants are expected to perform the tasks which they will meet in the position they have applied for- this will also help the recruiter to assess if the applicants skills match what they have claimed in their C.V. Work samples give the recruiter the best insight into how the applicant will perform in the future. Work samples also benefit the applicant as they too can assess the job and see if it is all they imagined and give them a good indication as to whether it will suit them or not. In the manufacturing industry this could be a very worthwhile assessment, as working on a production line does not suit everybody. Some people will find it too repetitive or boring and may not be able to cope with the environment, so an assessment like this may point that out to them before they start and thus allow them the opportunity to reject the job rather than take it and leave soon after due to not liking the job- something which benefits no body.

2.8 Assessment Centres

Winter (1995) describes assessment centres as an event where candidates can be evaluated based on their skills and capabilities. However, he is quick to point out that the assessments conducted in assessment centres can vary from country to country and that they are generally used in the recruitment of managers, but may also be used in general recruitment. Some of the assessments can include interviews, questionnaires, psychometric tests and job simulation- and each candidate is assessed on how they perform at each task by a team of managers from the organisation. It is Winter's (1995) belief that assessment centres are to be regarded as the most accurate way of selecting prospective employees and measuring their potential.

Moses (2008) believes that assessment centres, or "assassination centres", can be a very useful tool once they are conducted properly. Moses (2008) refers to them as assassination centres as when they were first being introduced the people conducting all the tests were untrained and thus the assessment centres were conducted poorly. A poorly conducted assessment can leave the candidate feeling like they have failed in their attempt, and this compiled with a lack of feedback did not bode well for a person's morale. However, since then, with the introduction of feedback and trained assessors it is Moses's (2008) belief that they have got better. Lance (2008) believes that there are basic characteristics of assessment centres that are universally applicable to all- however, Moses (2008) disagrees with this and cites it as one of the main issues when conducting an assessment centre. Moses (2008) says there are unique characteristics to all assessment centres and it is simply not possible to build a universal framework- there can be commonalities like aptitude and personality tests, role play simulations and case analyses- but no two assessment centres are alike. It is also advised that the assessments are carried out by between three and five people and that no more than twelve participants.

It is Lievens (2009) opinion that assessment centres are more successful than other recruitment and selection methods as they focus on the candidate's actual behaviour. Lievens (2009) believes that the most important factor of the whole assessment centre is that the candidates are evaluated by trained assessors- only with these is there a likelihood of success. Lievens (2009) also states that it is vital that the candidates are assessed over multiple job related situations and not just the one or two as only in these circumstances can the assessment truly be viewed as a realistic assessment.

Woodruffe (1993) identified human bias or human unconsciousness as a potential flaw in assessment centres. He criticises the potential for the assessors to score candidates that make good first impressions highly and following this, the participants actual performances could occasionally have very little to do with the selection process.

Blume et al (2010) also identifies human flaws as a reason for failure in assessment centres. Blume et al (2010) believe that there are a certain degree of people who experience a level of fear and anxiety with either real or anticipated communication with another person. Their study showed that people who experienced a difficulty interacting and/or communicating with new people score a lot lower in assessment centres.

Assessment centres are generally viewed as a means for hiring managers, however it is the belief of this researcher that an assessment centre could easily be adapted for the recruitment and selection of general operatives also. At this moment in time the manufacturing company is using a minimum of two managers to interview multiple people over a number of days when recruiting- therefore running assessment centres may not be above their budget and if adapted correctly they may select candidates who are more suitable for the general operative position and thus may reduce their staff turnover.

2.9 Exit Interviews

An exit interview is a one to one interview between the departing employee and a manager or a HR representative where the individual's reasons for leaving are explored. Suff (2014) believes that exit interviews are a powerful tool which managers can use to try and identify problems within the organisation which are causing people to leave. Following the information obtained the organisation can then set about correcting the issue if it is something within their powers- a job related reason rather than a personal. The organisation should try and ensure it is not the person leaving's direct line manager conducting the interview as this may have an effect on the answers obtained. A person may not be as inclined to tell their direct manager about the issues they have experienced- especially not if the line manager is responsible! Suff (2014) believes that exit interviews should be conducted in a sensitive and non-threatening way to encourage employees to be frank about their reasons for leaving. The interviewer must also be well trained at interviewing- they must be able to probe gently to find all the information they can from the departing employee. Taylor (2010) believes timing is a big issue when it comes to conducting exit interviews- he points out the fact that if you wait until the employees final day the employee may be nostalgic and almost regretting

leaving so their answers may not be totally honest, but also points out that if you do it too close to their resignation notice they may have a feeling of resentment at this period which could cloud their reasoning also. Another issue can be that if you wait until after they leave they may refuse to give you any feedback- although feedback at this stage may be more beneficial as the person has moved on and may be more open to telling you the real reasons for their departure. Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006) have a different opinion- it is their belief that timing will not matter as the person has already decided to leave, thus they will show little hesitance in providing feedback as they are leaving and you can't punish them for doing so.

It is the intention of this researcher to carry out exit interviews with people whom have left the manufacturing company recently as this researcher may be able to find reasons other than that of the recruitment and selection methods which are causing such a high turnover. It may also be possible to find out information about the recruitment process when they went through it, and how they found it- honest opinions from previous staff could help pin point a lot of the issues.

Suff (2014) identifies 5 points she believes are very important for the interviewer to follow;

- Ask open-ended questions- this will allow the departing employee to speak and say exactly what they want to say- thus encouraging them.
- Give the person prior notice- this will allow them the opportunity to think about what they are going to say.
- Assure the interviewee that all information will be totally confidential- this may also encourage them to open up and share everything with you.
- Remember to always stay neutral- do not make any judgemental comments based on the interviewees responses.
- Look for positives- it's all well and good collecting all the negatives, but surely they will have some positives which will reassure the company of areas they are getting it right.

2.10 Literature Review Conclusion

Recruitment and Selection is a very important process which all organisations, in every industry, region and sector have to engage in. There are many different advantages to having a successful recruitment and selection process- organisations will always want to keep their labour turnover as low as possible, as the higher it is the more money which needs to be invested into recruitment and possibly training and a successful recruitment and selection process could help reduce labour turnover. It can also give an organisation a competitive advantage through people- through having a fully functioning recruitment and selection process it is possible for an organisation to identify the best candidate, and thus gain an advantage through having the best staff possible.

An accurate job and/or person specification can assist recruiters when it comes to recruiting staff. A clear job specification will allow the recruiter to know exactly what the job they are hiring for entails, and thus screen candidates to see if they have the qualifications, or skills necessary to do the job. A clear person specification will additionally allow the recruiter to know exactly what type of person is ideal for the position, it will highlight characteristics which the recruiter can then look out for in the applicants.

The literature review then looked at the different recruitment and selection processes an organisation could use, be it a classic trio, a work sample or an assessment centre and pointed out the pros and cons of each. As regards the classic trio it looked at how beneficial an application form can be rather than just taking in c.v.'s. It then looked at the advantages a structured interview process can have over an unstructured one, and how interviewing is a skill people can be taught, and that interview training is very beneficial. Following this it has looked at both the advantages and disadvantages of references. It then looks at work samples and assessment centres and looks at the advantages of actually getting the applicants to perform a task which is representative of what the job will entail.

Following this the literature review has looked at the many advantages an organisation can obtain through conducting exit interviews. It points out how through interviewing employees who are leaving the organisation a company can assess why their staff are actually leaving and try and improve the business so they don't lose their staff to competitors or other industries.

Chapter 3: Aims and Objectives

3.1 Research Question

The focus of this research project is to evaluate the recruitment and selection process employed by Manufacturing Company X in assessing whether a more advanced process or method of recruitment and selection may reduce staff turnover.

3.2 Aims and Objectives

At present this company has acknowledged that they have an issue with staff turnover, which they believe may be coming from their recruitment and selection techniques.

This researcher is already aware that Manufacturing Company X is using the classic trio approach to recruitment, so the first objective will be to assess their current process. In order to do this it will be necessary to get all people involved in the current recruitment process to fill out a structured questionnaire. This will give me an overview of the current culture of the recruitment process.

From here the next objective will be to discover if the people involved in the recruitment and selection process are fully aware of the position they are trying to fill and what type of person is needed for this position. In order to do this it will be necessary to carry out a job analysis to assess exactly what it is the person being hired will have to do. In order to do this it will be important to observe the floor staff who actually do the job which the company are hiring for. It will also be important to obtain the employees and employer's perception of the job- this may be done through getting all management involved in recruiting and a large number of general operatives to fill out structured questionnaires. The results of these questionnaires can then be compared to the current job specification that the manufacturing company are working off. From here it will allow this researcher to compare and contrast the opinion the employer holds of the job versus what the job analysis actually found.

Finally this research will assess why people are actually leaving the job. Is it a case of a misunderstanding of exactly what the job entailed or did the person not feel welcome or where they offered a better job. This will be done by conducting exit surveys with the people whom have left recently- especially those who are not long gone through the recruitment process to see why they actually left- the answers gained from these exit interviews will allow this research to assess whether it is a recruitment issue or something else. From conducting these exit interviews and finding answers to the other objectives it will allow this

researcher to assess whether a more advanced method of recruitment and selection may reduce staff turnover or if there is another reason for staff turnover.

3.3 Significance

The purpose of this research is to assess whether or not this manufacturing company has adapted the best possible recruitment and selection practices and consider if another form of recruitment would reduce their staff turnover.

The significance of this piece of research will be to improve both the organisations and this researcher's knowledge of the different approaches to recruitment and selection available to human resource managers in manufacturing organisations, and how certain forms may reduce staff turnover. This research will also provide the organisation with a full job analysis which they can use in the future when recruiting, along with a recommendation as to what form of recruitment and selection they should use in the future. Also depending on results, it may highlight other issues the organisation may have which is causing staff turnover which is not applicable to the recruitment and selection practices.

3.4 Process of the research

In order to complete this piece of research the researcher has adapted a mixed method research approach. This researcher has given a structured questionnaire to all people involved in the recruitment and selection process within Manufacturing Company X to assess exactly what each person does and what influences them when recruiting and selecting. This researcher has also carried out a job analysis by both observing and getting all the people who are actually doing this manufacturing job day in and day out to fill out a structured questionnaire. Finally this researcher has carried out exit interviews with people who have left the organisation recently as a means of establishing why staff turnover is present.

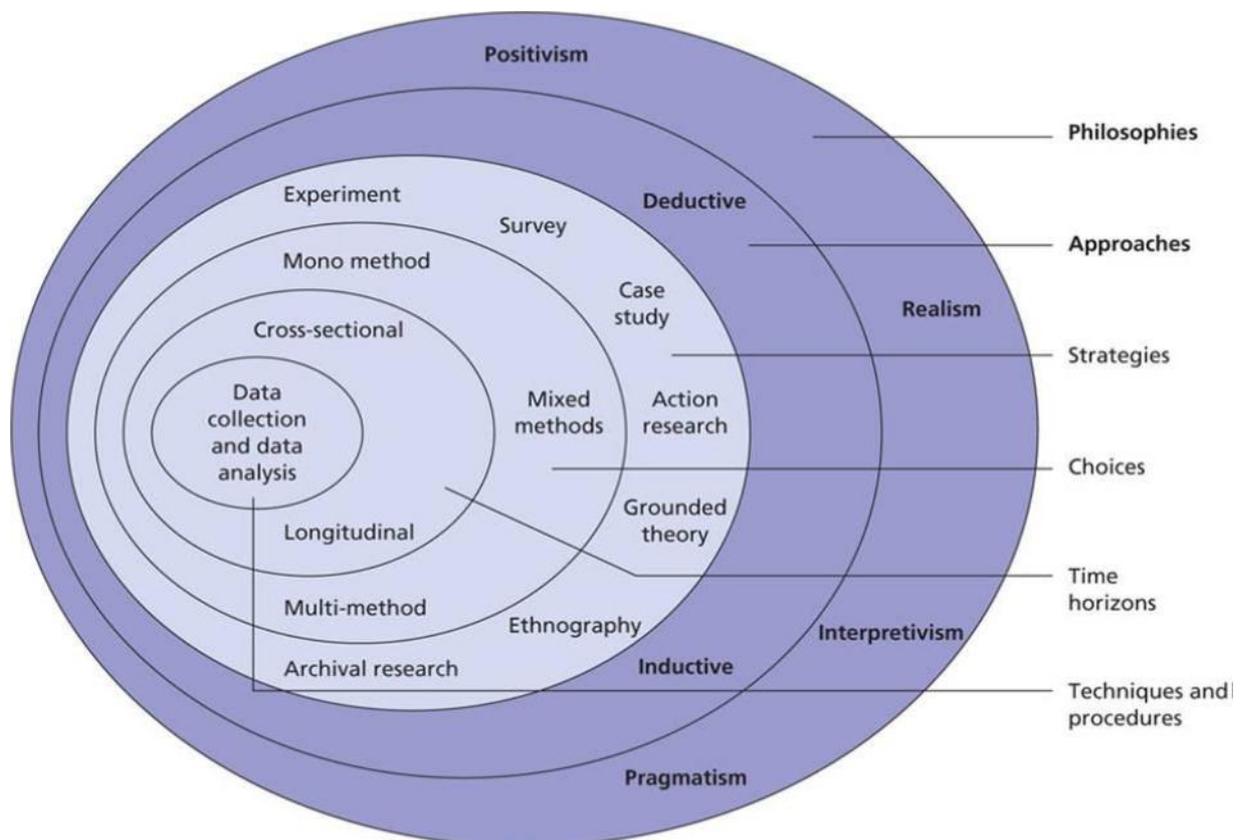
Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this research project is to evaluate the recruitment and selection process employed by Manufacturing Company X and assess whether a more advanced process or method of recruitment and selection may reduce staff turnover. When undertaking a research project like this it is important to ensure that you use the most relevant and appropriate research methodology. This chapter gives a detailed description of the chosen methodology as well as considering the strengths and weaknesses of the approach.

4.2 Research Philosophy and Approach

The research philosophy applied by any researcher is very important as should the wrong philosophy be applied it may impact the researchers overall findings thus labelling the findings unreliable or invalid and rendering the research as null and void. There are a number of issues which researchers must consider before choosing their method for data collection and analysis. Saunders et al, (2009) developed a research “onion”- a multi-layered diagram where they suggest researchers must start on the outside and peel through each layer to make sure they get the most appropriate research strategy, design and methodology.



(Saunders, et al., 2009)

Research philosophy is concerned with the development of knowledge- how it has been developed and what assumptions researchers have made or can make about it. These assumptions will depend on whether the researcher takes an ontological or epistemological viewpoint. Ontology deals with the nature of reality and whether a researcher subscribes to objectivism or subjectivism. Epistemology concerns itself with what constitutes as acceptable knowledge, and this will depend on whether the researcher adopts a positivist or interpretivist stance- that is, whether a person is to rely on facts or impressions. Whichever philosophical stance the researcher adopts will determine the research approach, which in the case of positivism will be deductive and in the case of interpretivism will be inductive, however, it is also common to combine both approaches. Saunders et al, (2009), are quick to point out that no research philosophy is better than another- research questions will often fall into more than one domain, so therefore adopting one over another is not totally practical in reality. They conclude by describing the pragmatist philosophy, where they say- the most important thing a researcher must consider when applying a research strategy and methodology is research question(s).

This researcher is using a pragmatist philosophy as he is working to the idea that the most important thing is to answer his research question.

4.3 Research Strategy, Design and Methodology

This researcher supported the pragmatist philosophy in that the research method applied was that which would allow the researcher to fulfil the research question, aims and objectives which were stated in chapter 3.1 and 3.2.

Given that the intention was to explore the current recruitment and selection process employed at Manufacturing Company X and assess whether a more advanced process or method may reduce turnover this researcher decided to use two structured questionnaires- a structured one for the recruiters and a structured one for the employees- to assess exactly what was happening in the current process through both asking the recruiters what happens, and seeing if the employees who completed the process concurred with what the recruiters have said.

This questionnaire was also designed to include questions which would help the researcher create a job analysis and a person specification analysis too. There were varying questions on

the recruiters questionnaire and the employees one to see if the recruiters were familiar with the job they are actually recruiting for- and to see if the job specification was similar to the one created by the researcher.

In addition the researcher also observed the general operatives doing their job on three different occasions to obtain an understanding of exactly what the staff have to do. This researcher also conducted exit interviews with some staff that had left the Manufacturing Company recently.

The research strategy is therefore a mixed methods approach- Bryman & Bell (2007, p.642) describe the term mixed methods research as “simple shorthand to stand for research that integrates quantitative and qualitative research within a single project”. “Quantitative data is numerical data and quantitative analysis is the analysis of quantitative data using statistical methods” (Quinlan, 2011, p. 380), this is applicable as we will see what percentages of people who completed the questionnaire agree or disagree on different aspects. Qualitative research on the other hand explores attitudes, behaviours and experiences (Dawson, 2010)- this will be used to assess the different attitudes and behaviours of the recruiters in comparison to the different experiences the employees have gone through, or go through.

4.4 Data Collection Methods

The primary data was collected using three different techniques. Originally the researcher went on two different occasions to observe the staff doing their daily job- these visits allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of what the staff actually did and thus helped the researcher to design certain parts of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was then given to all recruiters and all general operatives- this allowed the researcher to gather a large amount of information in a timely manner. Following the analysis of the questionnaires the researcher then returned to the Manufacturing Plant to observe the workers again having gained a greater insight into the opinions of what the workers actually do. Following this the researcher then conducted some exit interviews via phone call to employees who had left in the previous three months.

4.4.1 Questionnaire Design

Following the two trips to the Manufacturing Company this researcher worked in close coordination with the HR manager employed by the Manufacturing Company to create a questionnaire which would allow this researcher to obtain all the information he needed, along with abiding by the previously agree confidentiality agreement. This researcher used Microsoft word to create the questionnaire (see appendices 1/2) and after each edit it would be sent to the HR manager until it was fully approved.

The first questionnaire- the recruiter's questionnaire- was broken down into four distinct sections. Section 1 was entitled "Recruitment and Selection Process"- it is in this section questions were asked which would allow the researcher to obtain an idea of how each recruiter viewed the recruitment and selection process along with asking questions to identify exactly what goes on in the recruitment and selection process. Section 2- "Job Specification" was designed to find out what exactly the recruiter knew about the job or the current job specification, and find out if they were familiar with it. Section 3- "Person Specification" was designed to try and identify what attributes each recruiter felt were most necessary to do the job of a general operative. The final section, "Interview Training" was designed to find out if the recruiters actually knew or were previously shown, how to interview, and to establish whether the recruiter felt that their interviewing skills were up to date.

The second questionnaire- the employee's questionnaire- was broken down into three headings. Section 1- "Recruitment and Selection" was designed to find out about the employees experience when partaking in the recruitment and selection process. It was also designed to see if there were any ways to by-pass the recruitment and selection process. Section 2- "Job Specification" was designed to get the employees perception of their job and to establish if they agreed with the current job specification. And finally, section 3- "Individual Specification" was again designed to try and identify the attribute the employees think you need in order to be a good operative.

4.4.2 Questionnaire Administration

As the researcher required the questionnaire to be filled out by all recruiters and general operatives working at Manufacturing Company X, and would not be guaranteed the employees would do it, or have access if it was posted online the decision was made to do a

paper based questionnaire. Subsequently, the questionnaire was printed and put in an envelope and handed to each employee who was required to do the questionnaire and a drop off box was placed beside the clock card machine to make the returning of them minimum hassle on the employees. Each employee was given the questionnaire on a Monday and asked to have it returned to the drop off box by the following Friday.

The top of the questionnaire had a small introduction paragraph informing the recipient of why the questionnaire was being done, along with a note saying it wouldn't take much time and finally a note of thanks for taking their time to fill it out.

4.5 Data Analysis

This section deals with how the researcher handled the different pieces of data once it was collected. This section is broken up into three sub headings to show what was done with the data from each of the primary research methods.

4.5.1 Questionnaires

Once the researcher collected the drop off box which the questionnaires had been returned to, he brought them all home. Each envelope was then opened and depending on whether it was a recruiter's questionnaire or an employee's questionnaire it was put into a separate box. The researcher then used Microsoft Excel to record all the data- once the questionnaire had been put into the Excel figures it was then put into a separate, completed box. When all questionnaires had been fully recorded onto the excel spread sheet they were returned to the Manufacturing Company as this was part of the confidentiality agreement the researcher had with them.

4.5.2 Observation

The researcher was not allowed bring anything other than a note pad onto the Manufacturing Companies production floor as they have a lot of production secrets which give them a competitive advantage in the market, and thus would not allow photos or any other equipment on the floor which may compromise their trade once secrets.

On the first visit the researcher made some bullet point notes when he was on the production floor and once he returned home he expanded on all the points and stored the sheets with all his other vital dissertation documents.

On the second visit the researcher had some bullet points made out prior to arriving- things which the researcher wanted to specifically look at, he then expanded on these notes while on the floor and added any extra things he notices. Again, when he returned home he expanded on all these notes and stored it with the previous notes.

On the third visit the researcher had very specific points made before arriving, and these very the sole reasons for the third observation. On this observation the researcher wrote some notes on each of the points while on the production floor. Then when he returned home he made notes either agreeing or disagreeing with earlier points that either the researcher or the staff had made.

4.5.3 Exit Interviews

Prior to the exit interviews the researcher had a list of questions he wanted to ask the interviewee, with a large space between each question to facilitate any answers which were given. As the interviews were via phone calls the researcher had no way of recording the interview so he had to short hand the points the person was making. Following the interview these points were then expanded on and the notes were left with the observation notes.

4.6 Sampling

According to Saunders, et al, (2009 p243) the choice of sampling techniques used depends on the “feasibility and sensibility of collecting data to answer your research questions and to address your objectives from the entire population”. As this research was being done within a single organisation, the researcher decided to use all people involved in the recruitment process- both recruiters and employees.

With regards to how large a sample should be for quantitative research, Saunders, et al (2009), believe a minimum sample of 30 people is sufficient for statistical analysis, however, they do acknowledge that in some cases this may not be possible due to both the availability of resources and the ability to gain access.

A total of 7 managers and 75 general operatives were given the questionnaire- of which all 7 managers responded and 67 general operatives responded- 4 of whom didn't fill the questionnaire out in a serious manner and were thus excluded from the figures.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

The first ethical consideration this researcher met was in the very first meeting with the head of HR in the Manufacturing Company- this was because although he granted the researcher access to all information needed, it was clearly outlined that this Manufacturing Company did not want to be in any way identifiable as they are a well-known Company and did not want to publicise any issues which may have been uncovered. This was also applicable to the employees and therefore in my entire research it was implied that I was a HR employee and not a researcher- this was justifiable as none of the research was identifiable to any of the employees and the company is not identifiable either.

The next ethical consideration arose around the topic of primary research- the researcher recognised that both the recruiters and the general operatives may not be as likely to openly say what they think if their opinions were identifiable, and may be in fear of being reprimanded- it is for this reason that the researcher used questionnaires where the staff could feel their answers were completely anonymous. It was also for this reason that the researcher erected a drop off box so each person's questionnaire was not going through anyone else and so the employee could feel even more confident that their questionnaire was not identifiable to them.

4.8 Limitations

The first limitation this researcher must consider is that although all efforts have been made to reassure the employees filling out the questionnaires that everything they put down was completely confidential and unidentifiable, you are still dealing with peoples jobs, and they may be afraid that this was untrue and that they could experience some form of punishment for what they said, in the future.

Another limitation occurs in relation to the recruiters- because this researcher did not have an opportunity to observe them throughout their recruitment and selection process, the

researcher can only use the information taken from the questionnaires, where as if there had been an opportunity to observe the recruiters the researcher may have discovered other things.

The researcher was also limited when it came to conducting the exit interviews, as only 2 of the 7 people contacted were willing to do the exit interview. This limited the researchers ability to discover why people are actually leaving the organisation.

Another limitation to the researchers work is that the questionnaires were created by the researcher and the HR Manager of the Manufacturing company, and were not based on previously validated scales.

The researcher could not find any previous studies on the recruitment and selection processes employed by a Manufacturing Company so there was no form of previous comparison, this was another limitation.

Chapter 5: Research Findings and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

In this section the researcher will initially go through the research finding from both questionnaires, the researchers observations and the conducted exit interviews. From here the researcher will then analyse the findings as a whole under three main headings, Recruitment and Selection, Job Specification and Person Specification.

5.2 Research Findings

This section will take you step by step through the findings of both questionnaires, the observation and the exit interviews. As could be expected, some of the findings are more interesting than the others- these findings will be pointed out in the next section 5.3 Research analysis, where the researcher will tie the most interesting and important findings together.

5.2.1 Recruiters Questionnaire

100% of the recruiters given the questionnaire returned it.

Recruitment and Selection Process

Q1: What was your role in the recruitment system?

- All recruiters responded saying they were involved in the interviewing and selecting of candidates having previously looked at their application forms.

Q2. Do you feel your opinion is fully taken on board? Y/N

- 100% said “Yes” they did think their opinion was fully taken on board.

Q3. When interviewing do you feel you are drawn towards a certain type of person? Y/N

- 57% said “Yes” whereas 43% said “No”

Q4. Do you think anyone else would say you are? Y/N

- 100% said no, despite 57% saying they were.

Q5. Have you ever noticed a fellow interviewer/selector show a tendency towards a certain gender, type of person, possible friend? Y/N

- Again 100% said they hadn’t noticed a fellow interviewed being drawn towards a certain person.

Q7. Do you feel you have an effect on who is chosen? Y/N

- 100% said they were involved in selection

Q8. Would there be much discussion over who should get the job or is it a case of fill the position as soon as possible? i.e bums on seat recruitment vs quality candidate recruitment

- The general outcome from this was that the discussion between recruiters has improved lately; however, it was acknowledged that it could still get better. Some recruiters have blamed the lack of quality candidates as a reason for little discussion in some cases.

Q9. Have you ever hired someone just because they had a family member working here? Y/N

- 1 of the recruiters admitted they had hired someone just because a family member was working for the company.

Q10. If yes, can you recall was this hiring a success? Y/N

- The recruiter neglected to answer this question.

Q11. What do you see as the positives and/or the negatives to hiring family members?

- Positives:
 - Know the company and/or what the job entails.
 - May come from hard working background
- Negatives:
 - May want holidays at the same time
 - If there is an issue with one it may cause an issue with the other (cause unrest)

Q12. If given the option would you like to hire a family member of a current good employee?

- 43% say they would like to hire a family member of a good employee.

Q13. How would you describe your interviewing style?

- Generally left blank, but some comments were:
 - I like to make it feel like a friendly chat
 - Ask a lot of opening questions giving the person a chance to impress me
 - I try and keep the interview relaxed and see what the person is like

Q14. Have you got any habits?

- This was left blank by all.

Q15. Have you ever offered a person a job during the interview? Y/N

- 43% said they had offered a job during an interview

Q16. Has anyone you have interviewed alongside ever offered someone a job during the interview? Y/N

- 43% said they had seen this happen

Q17. Do you think this is right? Y/N

- Only 14% think it is ok to offer a job during the interview

Q18. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the best and 1 the worst, how would you rate the current recruitment and selection process?

- This question received an average of 5 out of 10

Q19. Can you give a reason to support this number out of ten:

- Some of the responses were:
 - From interview to starting work is too long.
 - Favouritism trumps quality.
 - Always difficult to assess quality of staff through an interview alone.

Q20. What would you change in the current process?

- Some of the responses were:
 - Applicants should have a minimum of a Leaving Certificate
 - Applicants should be proven team workers.
 - Applicants should be fluent at both writing and talking in English
 - Time between interview and starting be reduced

Job Specification

Q21. When was the last time you reviewed the job spec of the position you are hiring for?

0-3mths [29%] 3-6mths [14%] 6-12mths [14%] over a year [43%]

Q22. Have you ever seen the job spec? Y/ N

- Although all answered the previous question, 29% said they had never seen the job spec.

Q23. Can you describe the job a general operative carries out in your opinion.

- To do all jobs management request
- *other answers are confidential

Q24. Is this reflected in the job specification? Y/ N

- 57% say it is not reflected in the job spec.

Q25. Were you involved in the writing of the job spec? Y/N

- 86% of the recruiters were not involved in the writing of the job spec.

Q26. What would you say is the most challenging part of the work a general operative has to do?

- Some of the answers recorder were:
 - Must have serious attention to detail
 - Being able to work shift work
 - *other answers are confidential

Q27. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being most accurate and 1 being the least, how accurate do you think the job spec is?

- Only 2 recruiters actually answered this so this question is deemed irrelevant.

Person Specification

Q28. Have you an idea of the type of person you look to hire in this area? Y/N

- 57% said they had an idea of the person they were looking to hire

Q29. If yes, can you describe this person;

- Some of the answers recorder were:
 - English Speaking
 - Hardworking
 - Flexible
 - “can do”person
 - Team player
 - Can use their own initiative

Q30. Please tick the competencies you feel a person doing your job should have?

- The majority of the recruiters ticked all of the boxes so this question will not be considered.

Q31. Of the competencies you have ticked, can you name your top 5, with 1 being the most essential.

- The following got mentioned in the recruiters top 5:
 - Honesty - Attention to Detail - Initiative -use of common sense -flexibility -drive
 - problem management -commitment to job -consistency and reliability -concentration

Q32. Are there any attributes a person may contain which you think would rule them out for this position?

- Some of the answers recorded were:
 - Laziness
 - Unreliable
 - Poor English
 - Poor communication
 - Not a team player

Q33. Currently there is no individual specifications- no breakdown of the type of competencies a person should have to work here, do you think there should be one? Y/ N

- 57% said yes

Q34. Why?

- No one answered as to why or why not.

Interview Training

Q35. Have you ever been shown how to interview? Y/N

- 29% have been shown vs 71% who haven't

Q36. Did this training occur in your current job? Y/N

- 100% have not received training with this company

Q37. If no, where did you receive the training?

- Of the 29%, the training was done in either college or in another company

Q38. If yes, how long was your training period on how to interview?

- In college it was just a part of a general course
- In another organisation, it was a two day course which was very beneficial

Q39. When did this training first occur?

- Many years ago

Q40. Have you had a refresher course since? Y/N

- 100% have not had a refresher course

Q41. If yes, how many refresher courses?

- none

Q42. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best, and 1 being the worst, how would you grade your own interviewing skills?

- 2 didn't answer, of the rest the average was 5

Q43. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best, and 1 being the worst, how would you grade your interviewing partners on average?

- 3 didn't answer, of the rest the average was 7

Q44. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best, and 1 being the worst, how would you grade the interviewing training you received.

- This question was not answered at all.

Q45. Do you feel you could do with a refresher course on interviewing? Y/N

- 86% of recruiters feel they could do with a training course on interviewing

5.2.2 Employees Questionnaire

75 general operatives were given the questionnaire- of which 67 general operatives responded- 4 of whom did not fill the questionnaire out in a serious manner and were thus excluded from the figures. Therefore, 16% of the questionnaires recorded is unavailable information.

Recruitment and Selection Process

Q1. Please tick the period of time you have worked for Pat the Baker?

0-3mths [4%] 3-6mths [7%] 6-12mths [13%] 1-2yrs [11%] 2-3yrs [5%] 3-5yrs [32%]
5+ [12%]

Q2. Can you remember who interviewed you? Y/N

- 7% said no, 77% said yes

Q3. If yes, who was it?

- This question was asked in order to see how many recruiters could be identified- there were a total of 21 interviewers named, however, only 8 were named by the staff who started over the last 3 years- this is very promising as 7 recruiters were identified by the HR department- so this researcher would presume that we have questioned 7 out of the 8 people who have worked in recruitment over the last 3 years.

Q4. Did you do previous research on the company before the interview? Y/N

- 21% said yes, leaving 63% saying no

Q5. If yes, where did you obtain your information from?

- Some of the answers recorded were:
 - Internet
 - Other people who worked at the company
 - Family member

Q6. Did you have any internal influence which may have helped you get the job? (e.g Friend or family member) Y/ N

- 27% said yes, 57% said no

Q7. Did you know you had the job prior to your interview? Y/N

- 7% said yes, 77% said no

Q8. Did you know during the interview that you were going to get the job? Y/N

- 25% said yes, 59% said no

Q9. If yes, how did you know?

- Some of the answers recorded were:
 - I was offered the job
 - I was told to make sure I had my phone on me later that day
 - I was asked if I was available to start Monday

Q10. Were you told during the interview that the job was yours? Y/N

- 28% said yes, 56% said no

Q11. Roughly how long after the interview were you offered the job?

- Some of the answers were:
 - one week
 - two weeks
 - two months

- a month later

Q12. Have you ever helped somebody get a job here? Y/N

- 13% said yes, 71% said no

Q13. If yes, how did you go about it?

- I talked to my manager
- I called my floor supervisor

Q14. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best and 1 being the worst, how would you rate your interview?

- In general this was left blank so this question will not be included in consideration

Job Specification

Q15. Prior to being hired had you seen the job specification so you would know what the job entailed? Y/N

- 40% said yes, 44% said no

Q16. When was the last time you saw the job specification?

When hired [33%] Last training course [7%] Daily basis [8%] Can't recall [40%]

Q17. From reading the job specification was the job what it said it was? Y/N

- 50% said yes, 34% said no

Q18. How would you describe the job you do?

- The information described here is confidential

Q19. What would you describe as the most challenging part of your job?

- Some of the answers recorder were:
 - Shift work
 - Lack of ventilation
 - Heat
 - Dealing with untrained staff

Q20. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the most accurate, and 1 being the least, how accurate to the actual job do you think the job specification is?

- This was left blank in a lot of cases and so will not be included in consideration

Person Specification

Q21. Please tick the competencies you feel a person doing your job should have?

- A lot of the staff ticked all of the boxes so this question will not be considered

Q22. Of the competencies you have ticked, can you name your top 5, with 1 being the most essential.

- The following were in a minimum of 10 peoples top 5's:
 - Honesty – Accurate Listening – Initiative – Handling Stress – Meeting Standards
 - Concentration - Attention to detail – Use common sense – Problem Management

-Problem Analysis

Q23. Are there any attributes a person may contain which you think would rule them out for this position?

- The most common answers responded here:
 - People who can't read
 - Lazy
 - A "know it all"
 - Individual
 - Sensitive Person

Q24. Over your period here, could you identify a type of person who you feel would be a good fit for the job you do?

- This was generally left blank and so will not be considered.

Q25. Currently there is no individual specifications, do you think there should be one? Y/ N

- 43% said yes, 41% said no

5.2.3 Observation

The researcher visited the Manufacturing Company on three different occasions to observe the general operatives. The first two visits were prior to handing out and analysing the questionnaires, the final visit was after the analysis of the questionnaires was complete.

First Visit:

The first visit was organised so the researcher could gain an understanding of exactly what happens on the production floor and what each person does.

This researcher was amazed at the way in which the production floor operated. From the beginning of the production line to the end, it seemed to tip through flawlessly, with each employee doing various jobs at different sections of the production line- all of whom play a massive part in the final product being completed perfectly.

From the initial observation it was clear that no matter what section of the production line the operative was put on they had a great deal of responsibility as an error at any stage of the production line would result in the product being ruined and therefore immediately scrapped.

On this occasion there was so much the researcher observed, combined with the amazement of the way in which the production line ran that when the researcher got to analysing it there was only a few things which he could totally remember.

From this the researcher began to compose the questionnaire, but also contacted the HR Manager to arrange another opportunity to observe the operators as there was so much to take in, the researcher knew there was more for him to observe.

Second Visit:

As the researcher had previously seen how the production line, machines and operators operated the researcher knew what to expect when arriving at the Manufacturing Company. On this visit the researcher paid more attention to the job the operator was carrying out rather than looking at the production line as a whole.

It was clear no matter what position the operator was placed in, the operator had to maintain a great deal of concentration and a lot of attention to detail.

On the first visit the researcher seen the production line operate perfectly, without any problems , however on the return visit the researcher seen the production line stop due to an operator identifying a problem with the product at an early stage of the production line. Luckily for the Manufacturing Company this issue was identified at such an early stage that the product could actually be saved, however had it gone through one more stage it would not

have been recoverable. This really made the researcher notice the responsibility that each operator has, as mistakes could cost this Manufacturing Company a large amount of money.

The researcher also discovered some of the finer requirements of the general operatives. The operatives must use different Health and Safety equipment which may make their job conditions harder. They are unable to leave their position any stage unless they have been replaced by another person as the production line cannot stop and each position is vitally important (there are 2 operatives whose jobs it is to cover other operatives for lunch breaks, bathroom breaks or any emergency which causes an operator to need to leave their position).

Following this observation the researcher felt confident composing the questionnaire and understanding exactly what each operator does.

Third Visit:

Having gone through the questionnaires and analysing what both the recruiters and the operators thought was involved in the job, or what type of people are needed for the job, the researcher returned to the Manufacturing Company to observe again.

On this occasion the researcher went back with certain aspects he wanted to look at to see why recruiters or operators said certain things in their questionnaires.

One of the main things the researcher wanted to observe was the need to be fully competent in writing and talking English as in prior visits the researcher had not noticed a great deal of talking, and had not seen any place where an employee needed to write English, however, on this visit the researcher noticed different quality forms which must be filled out by each employee, and a lot of interaction between supervisors and employees as they keep an eye on each section of the production line.

The researcher also wanted to observe how much team work is actually needed, but on this occasion the researcher noticed how at different stages the operators will pass a message to the next person in the line to ask them to check something which they think may cause the product to become a reject later, but what is not serious enough at their stage for them to stop the line.

5.2.4 Exit Interviews

This researcher contacted 7 people who had left the Manufacturing Company over the last few months. Of these 7 people, 5 apologised that they had no time or interest to do the exit interview- the other two were willing to answer a few questions via the phone on the recruitment process and why they left.

It is for this reason that organisations should consider doing exit interviews prior to the person leaving as once they have left they have little reason to bother doing the exit interview.

The first person said that they had gone through the recruitment process a few months beforehand although they were confident they would get the job prior to doing the interview as they had a family member working for the company already. They said the job was exactly what they had been told it would be, although, they had not seen a job specification. Their reason for leaving was that they had been offered another job, which suited their lifestyle better.

The second person went through the recruitment process roughly three months beforehand, they had no internal influence to help them get the job, and never seen a job specification. They said they left as they said the job didn't suit them, they weren't aware of how much concentration would be needed, and found it hard to stay focused for the whole shift- they left to look for another job, as this job was too stressful.

The researcher was disappointed that the other people refused to do the exit interview, but was happy to gain some information from the two people who agreed to take part, as any extra information would help in the overall conclusion.

5.3 Research Analysis

In this section the researcher will link together the information taken from the findings of the different forms of research, with the aim to answer the research questions and objectives from chapter 3. This section will be broken down into three different sections for the analysis; Recruitment and Selection, Job Specification and Person Specification.

5.3.1 Recruitment and Selection

Firstly it is promising to note that all 100% of recruiters feel that their opinion is fully taken on board and they have an input into the selection of the successful candidate.

57% of the recruiters noted that they have found themselves drawn towards certain people during an interview- what the researcher found strange here is that this is despite the fact that no recruiter said they noticed a colleague being drawn towards a certain candidate and only 25% of the general operatives questioned were confident they were going to get the job during the interview. This shows that the recruiters are good at hiding their emotions from the candidate, but could be seen as negative as two recruiters may have polar opposite opinions and have no idea.

As noted above, 100% of recruiters feel they have an effect on who is selected for the position, the researcher finds this very strange, as by their own admission, 43% of recruiters have offered a candidate a job during an interview and 28% of employees questioned said they were offered their job during the interview- thus questioning how all recruiters can be involved in the selection process. This practice obviously prevents a discussion between the recruiters after the interview, implying either one person has made the call themselves or a decision has been made prior to the interview, but either way, it is not ideal practise. The researcher was also surprised to discover that only 1 of the recruiters believes it is ok to offer a job this quickly, yet 43% have done so. However, it must be noted that some of the recruiters have said that the discussion has improved as of late, and that they feel on many occasions the reason for lack of discussion is the lack of quality applicants.

1 recruiter has admitted to hiring at least one person just because a family member was already working for the company, while 43% of the recruiters have admitted they would like to hire a family member of a good employee. These figures are backed up by the fact that 27% said they had an internal influence which helped get them the job. The recruiters have noted both positives and negatives to hiring family members, but one must worry that some recruiters are willing to give an individual a job on a family members attitude or work rate, rather than fully assess whether this person is a quality candidate on their own attributes.

The recruiters questioned gave the recruitment and selection process a mark of 5 out of 10. Some have noted that occasionally favouritism has been chosen over quality. Others have noted that it is always going to be hard in an interview situation to judge exactly how good a person is without actually seeing them work. The recruiters have suggested that all applicants should have a minimum of a Leaving Certificate Qualification, along with being competent with both the written and spoken English language, as these are two things the recruiters feel as definite requirements to work for this Manufacturing Company.

The researcher was very surprised to discover that only 29% of the recruiters have actually be shown how to conduct an interview, and even at this they acknowledged that it has been “many years” since they were shown. This may point out why there could be issues arising in the recruitment and selection process. The recruiters appear to acknowledge that their interviewing skills are not what they could be as 86% of recruiters have said they could do with a training course on interviewing.

5.3.2 Job Specification

Firstly this researcher finds it very worrying that over 50% of the recruiters have not reviewed the job specification in at least six months, despite the fact the Company is constantly engaging in recruitment- it may also be noted that 29% of the recruiters have said they have never seen the Job Specification. This researcher believes this is very bad practise as how can a recruiter expect to find the right person for the job when they are not fully aware of what the job entails.

It is also worrying the fact that over 70% of the general operatives can either “not recall” or haven’t seen the job specification since they were hired.

50% of the general operatives questions said the job specification was similar to what the job actually entailed, however, when 40% can’t recall when they saw the job specification it makes the researcher question whether this 50% actually know, or are just agreeing for the sake of it. The recruiters disagreed with this figure, as 57% of them said the job was not reflected in the job specification, but again, its appears to be a while since the recruiters viewed it, so they may also be unsure.

This researcher did view the job specification and found it to be very broad, but having observed the general operatives this researcher found it very accurate to what the general operatives have to do.

5.3.3 Person Specification

Currently there is no person specification for the recruiters to follow, and this researcher found it very promising that 57% of the recruiters and 43% over 41% of the general operatives believe that there should be one, as they clearly realise there are certain characteristics which suit the position, and that there are other characteristics which don’t.

There are six attributes which both the recruiters and the general operatives believe are important in order to be a good employee for the Manufacturing Company, these are:

Honesty, Attention to detail, Initiative, Use of common sense, Problem Management and Concentration.

Others which are mentioned by the employees which this researcher agrees with having observed the general operatives and which came up during the exit interviews are:

Accurate Listening, Handling Stress, Meeting Standards and Problem Analysis.

Both recruiters and general operatives agreed that people who are; Lazy, Not able to speak English, and not able to work as part of a team would not be suited to this position. Having observed the general operatives and from one of the exit interviews this researcher believes a person who is easily distracted, or finds monotonous work boring or hard to do would not be suited to this position.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a discussion of the key findings of this research project. These findings will be reviewed against the Literature Review and will demonstrate how they support or contradict the models or theories identified in that chapter.

6.2 Discussion

“Attracting and recruiting the best employees is critical to success in all sectors and to all types of organisations, regardless of size” (Cullen & Farrelly, 2005, p. 41), and this Manufacturing Company is no different. The Manufacturing Company this researcher analysed uses a classic trio when it comes to recruiting and selecting their employees. The first part of the classic trio is to do with the collection of application forms and c.v’s, currently this Manufacturing Company don’t have an application form, and thus have no form of comparison from candidate to candidate. Also, the c.v’s they do have are stored in a box and when a job opens they delve into the box, not knowing how long each c.v has been there. This is just clear general bad practice.

The next part of the classic trio, the interview, is a very important part of the recruitment and selection process as it “personalises” it (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2006). 57% of the recruiters working for Manufacturing Company have noted that they have found themselves drawn towards certain people during an interview, this backs up Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006, p. 179) who say that “interviewers have a tendency to make up their minds within the first few minutes of the interview”. Currently the recruiters are using unstructured interviews, as they have said they like the interview to be relaxed and like a “chat”. However, Barclay (1999) and Taylor (2008) have said that they believe structured interviews are much better as a comparison can then be made from one candidate to the next rather than having a chat and seeing who the recruiter likes. Herriot (1992, p.435) opinion is that an interview should be like a chat as “only by these means can they discover whether the applicant is likely to fit in to the organisation”. The recruiters at Manufacturing Company X did note that it can be hard to identify whether or not a person will be a good worker from an interview, Van Iddekinge, et al, (2004) agree when they say that an interview cannot necessarily be said to be valid as it is trying to measure the employee’s suitability to a job just through talking. The fact that the recruiters are mentioning this as a problem they feel they experience, work samples may be an option the Manufacturing Company could consider, as, they “present applicants with a set of tasks or exercises that are nearly identical to those performed on the job” (Ployhart, 2006,

p. 880), or an Assessment centre where the applicants can do both an interview and a job simulation. 71% of the recruiters have not been trained on how to interview, despite the fact that authors like Cottrell (2012) and Pendlebury (1970) have noted that trained interviewers are better than untrained ones, and that interviewing skills can be acquired through training. It is promising though that the recruiters themselves (86%) have said they would like to do a training course, which could only improve their interviewing skills.

The third aspect to the classic trio is references, a recruitment tool which the Manufacturing Company appears to put little value on. The Manufacturing Company seem to have the same attitude towards references as Taylor (2008, p. 281) who believes that a reference can “often say more about its author than about its subject”. The Manufacturing Companies lack of value on references is confirmed through the fact that 43% of their recruiters have offered a candidate a job during the interview, thus not having time to check their references. Dunn (1995) disagrees with this attitude as he believes that by using referees an organisation should be able to reduce their staff turnover and increase productivity as you get a clear indication of the person from their previous job.

Froschheiser (2008) highlighted the fact that “over 30% of CEO’s said that up to half of their employees are a poor fit for their job” (2008, p.30), but this can be avoided if an organisation carries out a job analysis. The Manufacturing Company have actually gone through the effort of creating a job specification, one which this researcher finds to be very accurate. Gunnigle, et al, (2011, p. 106) says that a good job description should be “a broad statement of the purpose, scope, duties and responsibilities that are attached to the job”, and this is what the Manufacturing Company have done. However, even though researchers like McMahon & O’Carroll (1999) and Pilbeam & Corbridge (2006) have said an accurate job description can be very useful when going through the recruitment and selection process, it is irrelevant how good or accurate the job description is when over 50% of your recruiters don’t view it regularly. If they are not reviewing it then how are they supposed to know exactly what they are recruiting for? They may have viewed it in the past, but refreshing their memory would be very beneficial.

Although while going through the frameworks related to a person specification in the Literature review the researcher made a point of stating that the frameworks appeared to be well outdated, this does not mean that the researcher does not believe that a person specification is not a good idea. On the contrary, this researcher, just like the 57% of

recruiters and 43% of general operatives working for the Manufacturing Company actually believes a person specification may be a good way of identifying more accurately people that are suitable for this position.

Unfortunately through a lack of participation from previous staff when conducting the exit interviews this researcher was unable to identify the exact reasons as to why staff are leaving this organisation. It is for this reason that authors such as Taylor (2010) identifies timing as a major issue around exit interviews- if you wait until they leave they may refuse to give you feedback. The two people who did however agree to the exit interviews both noted that the job didn't exactly suit them. Had these people experienced the job, or what it entailed prior to being offered the positions they may have refused to take up the job offer, knowing that it would not suite them, and this could reduce the staff turnover, and thus save time and money.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This section will include a conclusion to all of the researchers work, giving the answers to the aims and objections of the research, and thus answering the research question. The researcher will then give a list of recommendations he feels Manufacturing Company could follow in order to improve their recruitment and selection process, and reduce their staff turnover.

7.2 Conclusion

The Manufacturing company claims to be currently using the classic trio format of recruitment and selection, however, this researcher does not believe that they are utilizing it at all. Firstly they use c.v's, but, even at this, the c.v's are not necessarily recent as once a c.v is handed to them it is placed in a box and when a position becomes available they grab the top few c.v's. The Manufacturing company would be a lot better off if they were to design an application form which allowed the recruiters to compare the different applicants in areas of important criteria for the position. From a specifically designed application form the recruiters could select the applicants they feel fit the profile of the job and invite them for an interview.

Currently at the interviewing stage the applicants are being interviewed by mainly untrained interviewers- 71%. This is not an ideal practice as, if these recruiters have not be trained on how to interview, how can the Manufacturing Company be sure that they these people are doing the job correctly. In fact, the findings suggest they aren't as 43% of the recruiters have offered somebody a job during the interview, 1 recruiter has given a person a job just because they had a family member already working for the company, and this must be regarded as bad practice as it prevents any form of debate around the selection, both between the recruiters and between applicants. Another possible issue which arises from the lack of trained interviewers is that the interviews are unstructured and thus leaves the recruiters with no form of comparison form candidate to candidate.

It is worrying to think that there is an up to date job specification available to the recruiters, yet over 50% of the recruiters have not viewed the job specification over the last six months. This could impact on the candidate they choose as they may not have a full understanding of the position they are hiring for, and thus may think someone is a good fit, but their idea of the position could be totally different to what it actually entails.

The next part of the classic trio is reviewing references- at the moment the Manufacturing Company don't seem to put any value on references, this is presumed through the fact that they are offering jobs during the interview process. If this is the case, it is not ideal practice as the recruiters could obtain vital information about the candidates by doing reference checks.

A person specification is something that both the recruiters and the general operatives believe should be in operation, and the researcher must agree, as by installing one, the recruiters will be able to clearly identify the characteristics needed to do the job successfully.

Unfortunately the Manufacturing Company do not currently carry out exit interviews, and when the researcher contacted past employees he had very little luck in getting responses, so it has been hard to identify the reasons behind people are leaving the company. Thus it is hard to say exactly what part the current recruitment and selection process plays towards the high staff turnover rate.

Having said this, there are clearly some issues with the current process which the Manufacturing Company should try and correct. One issue the recruiters themselves have highlighted is that it can be hard to judge exactly how good a person will be at the job without viewing them doing the work, with this in mind, the Manufacturing Company may consider introducing some form of job simulation into their recruitment and selection process.

In the next part, 7.2, the researcher has made some recommendations he believes can improve the current recruitment and selection process, and thus, hopefully reduce their staff turnover.

7.2 Recommendations

It is this researcher's recommendation that the Manufacturing Company:

- Puts a printable job application form onto their website, which must accompany c.v's. This application form should have specific questions which will identify the person's qualifications, some of their characteristics, if they have any experience in manufacturing. This will allow the recruiters to compare the applicant quickly and if they find one they are interested in, they can then view this persons c.v. or call them for an interview.
- Trains all their recruiters on how to conduct interview, and creates a structured interview process which will allow the recruiters to compare the different applicants.
- Position the Job Specification in a location that makes it accessible to all staff, and make sure all recruiters are fully familiar with it.
- Introduces some form of job simulation into the recruitment process, which the person must do along with their interview, this will allow the recruiters to see how the person preforms the tasks, it will also give the applicant a clear understanding of what will be required of them should they get the position.
- Eliminate the practice of offering jobs during interviews, and start having more discussion around the selection process.
- All applicant's references should be screened; recruiters may discover some extra, valuable information about the applicant by doing this.
- Introduce the practice of conducting exit interviews so as to clearly identify the reasons behind an employee leaving their position.

Reference List

Reference List:

Armstrong, M., 2010. *Handbook on Human Resource Management Practices*. 11th ed. London: Kogan Page Publisher.

Asher, J. & Sciarrino, J., 1974. Realistic Work Sample Tests: A Review. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, Volume 27, pp. 519-533.

Barclay, J., 1999. Employee Selection; A question of structure. *Personnel Review*, 28(1/2), pp. 134-151.

Beardwell, I. & Holden, L., 1997. *Human Resource Management: A contemporary approach*. 2nd ed. London: Financial Times Professional Limited.

Beardwell, I. & Holden, L., 2001. *Human Resource Management- A contemporary approach*. 3rd ed. Essex: Pearson Education Limited .

Blume, B. D., Balswin, T. T. & Dreher, G. F., 2010. Examining the Effects of Communication Apprehension Within Assessment Centres. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*, 83(3), pp. 663-671.

Bryman, A. & Bell, E., 2007. *Business Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Callinan, M. & Robertson, I., 2000. Work Sample Testing. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 8(4), pp. 248-260.

CIPD, 2003. *Labour Turnover Survey Report*, London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development..

Collis, J. & Hussey, R., 2003. *Business Research: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Cook, M., 2004. *Personal Selection: Adding Value through People*. 4th ed. Chichester: John Wiley.

Cooper, D., Robertson, I. & Tinline, G., 2003. *Recruitment and Selection: A Framework for Success*. London: Thomson.

- Cottrell, T., 2012. "Interviewing efficiencies or interviewing efficiently?". *The Bottom Line*, 25(3), pp. 102-106.
- Cullen, J. & Farrelly, M., 2005. *Best Practice HR in Ireland*. Cork: Oak Tree Press.
- Dawson, C., 2010. *Introduction to Research Methods; A Practical Guide for anyone taking on a Research Project*. Oxford: How to Books.
- Drysdale, D., Bonanni, C. & Shuttlewood, P., 2010. International Business and Economics Research Journal. 9(11).
- Dunn, P., 1995. Pre-Employment Referencing Aids Your Bottom Line. *Personnel Journal*, 74(2).
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. & Jackson, P. R., 2008. *Management Research*. London: SAGE Publications Limited.
- Fitz-enz, J., 1995. *How to measure human resources management*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Fletcher, C., 1996. Using Past Behaviour As A Guide To Potential People Management. *Journal of the Institute of Personnel and Development*, Volume 21st March.
- Froschheiser, L., 2008. Reliableplant. *Recruitment fundamentals: Get more 'A' players on board*, 27 February.
- Ghuri, P. & Gronhaug, K., 2005. *Research Methods in Business Studies; A Practical Guide*. Essex: Prentice Hall.
- Gill, J. & Johnson, P., 2010. *Research Methods for Managers*. 4th ed. London: Sage.
- Gunnigle, P., Heatry, N. & Morley, M., 2011. *Human Resource Management in Ireland*. 4th ed. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.
- Herriot, P., 1992. *Assessment and Selection in Organisations*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd..
- Hill, J. & Trist, E., 1955. Temporary Withdrawal from Work Under Full Employment. *Human Relations*, Issue 8, pp. 121-152.

- Hector, A., 2012. *Nepotism & HRM practices - How they affect player satisfaction: A Study of G.A.A Clubs*. Dublin: Nation College of Ireland.
- IBEC, 2013. *Employee Turnover Report 2013*, Ireland: IBEC research unit 2013.
- Jackson, S., 2000. Are You The Best Person For The Job?. *Canadian HR Reporter*, 13(16).
- Jenkins, J., 1983. *Management Trainees in Retailing; Recruitment Handbook*. Aldershot: Gower.
- Lance, C., 2008. Why Assessment Centres Work The Way They Are Supposed To. *Journal of Industrial and Organisational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice*, Volume 1, pp. 84-97.
- Lievens, F., 2009. Assessment Centres: A Tale About Dimensions, Exercises, and Dancing Bears.. *European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology*, 18(1), pp. 102-121.
- McMahon, G. & O'Carroll, A., 1999. *The Recruitment Process in Gunnigle, P. The Irish Employee Recruitment Handbook*. Dublin: Oak Tree Press.
- Moses, J., 2008. Assessment Centres Work, But For Different Reasons. *Journal of Industrial and Organisational Psychology*, Volume 1, pp. 134-136.
- Munro-Fraser, J., 1954. *A Handbook of Employment Interviewing*. s.l.:MacDonald & Evans.
- O' Reilly, C. & Pfeffer, J., 2000. *Hidden value: How great companies achieve extraordinary results with ordinary people*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Pendlebury, C., 1970. Some interviewing issues. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 2(3), pp. 144-146.
- Pilbeam, S. & Corbridge, M., 2006. *People Resourcing: Contemporary HRM in Practice*. Essex: Pearson Education.
- Ployhart, R. E., 2006. Staffing in the 21st Century: New Challenges and Strategic Opportunities. *Journal of Management*, 32(6).
- Quinlan, C., 2011. *Business Research Methods*. s.l.:Cengage Learning EMEA.

Rees, G. & French, R., 2010. *Leading, Managing and Developing People*. 3rd ed. s.l.:CIPD.

Roberts, G., 2005. *Recruitment and Selection*. 2nd ed. London: CIPD.

Robertson, I. & Kandola, R., 1982. Work Sample Tests: Validity, Adverse Impact and Applicant Reaction. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, Volume 55, pp. 171-183.

Rodger, A., 1952. *The Seven-point plan*. London: National Institute of Industrial Psychology.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A., 2009. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 5th ed. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A., 2012. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 6th ed. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Smith, M. & Roberson, I. T., 1993. *The Theory and Practice of Systematic Personnel Selection*. 2nd ed. London: Macmillan.

Smith, M. & Robertson, I., 1986. *The Theory and Practice of Systematic Staff Selection*. London: Macmillan.

Suff, R., 2008. Background Checks in Recruitment; Employers' Current Methods. IRS Employment Review. No. 896.

Suff, R., 2014. Measuring Labour Turnover. *XpertHR*, 16 July, pp.
<http://www.xperthr.co.uk/good-practice-manual/measuring-labour-turnover/115873/> .

Tahan, S. & Kleiner, B. H., 2001. New Developments Concerning Giving Employment References. *Management Research News*, 24(3/4), pp. 94-96.

Taylor, S., 2008. *People Resourcing 4th Edition*. London: The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Taylor, S., 2010. *Resourcing and Talent Management*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Turner, P., November 2010. *Reflections on Workforce Planning*, s.l.: CIPD.

Van Iddekinge, C., Eidson, C., Raymark, P. & Attenweiler, W., 2004. What Do Structured Selection Interviews Really Measure? The Construct Validity of Behaviour Description Interviews. *Human Performance*, 17(1).

Vokić, N. P. & Vidović, M., 2008. *HRM as a Significant Factor for Achieving Competitiveness through People: The Croatian Case*. Zagreb: International Atlantic Economic Society 2008.

Winter, B., 1995. Assessment Centres: Keeping up With and Getting Ahead of Changing Organisations. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 19(2), pp. 15-19.

Wood, R. & Payne, T., 1998. *Competency Based Recruitment and Selection*. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons Ltd..

Woodruffe, C., 1993. *Assessment Centres: Identifying and Developing Competence*. 2nd ed. London: CIPD.

Appendices

Recruiters Questionnaire

Recruiters Questionnaire

Here at ----- we are always striving to improve the way we operate at every department of the business, at this moment in time we are concentrating on our recruitment and selection process. We would appreciate it if you could take 3 minutes to fill out this questionnaire and then return it in the envelope to the drop off box. We are keen for all employees to fill in this questionnaire so we can get a clear overview. Thank you very much for your time.

Recruitment and Selection Process

1. What is your role in the recruitment system?

2. Do you feel your opinion is valid or fully taken on board? Yes No

3. When you are interviewing or selecting do you feel you are drawn towards a certain type of person? Yes No

4. Do you think anyone else would say you are? Yes No

5. Have you ever noticed a fellow interviewer/selector show a tendency towards a certain gender, type of person, possible friend? Yes No

6. If yes, how so?

7. Do you feel you have an effect on who is chosen? Yes No

8. Would there be much discussion over who should get the job or is it a case of fill the position as soon as possible? i.e bums on seat recruitment vs quality candidate recruitment.

9. Have you ever hired someone just because they had a family member working here?

Yes No

10. If yes, can you recall was this hiring a success? Yes No

11. What do you see as the positives and/or the negatives to hiring family members?

12. If given the option would you like to hire a family member of a current good employee?

Yes No

13. How would you describe your interviewing style?

14. Have you got any habits?

15. Have you ever offered a person a job during the interview? Yes No

16. Has anyone you have interviewed alongside ever offered someone a job during the interview? Yes No

17. Do you think this is right? Yes No

18. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the best and 1 the worst, how would you rate the current recruitment and selection process?

19. Can you give a reason to support this number out of ten:

20. What would you change in the current process?

Job Specification

21. When was the last time you reviewed the job spec of the position you are hiring for?

0-3mths 3-6mths 6-12mths over a year

22. Have you ever seen the job spec? Yes No

23. Can you describe the job a general operative carries out in your opinion.

24. Is this reflected in the job specification? Yes No

25. Where you involved in the writing of the job spec? Yes No

26. What would you say is the most challenging part of the work a general operative has to do?

33. Currently there is no individual specifications- no breakdown of the type of competencies a person should have to work here, do you think there should be one? Yes No

34. Why?

Interview Training

35. Have you ever been shown how to interview? Yes No

36. Did this training occur in your current job? Yes No

37. **If no**, where did you receive the training?

38. **If yes**, how long was your training period on how to interview?

39. When did this training first occur?

40. Have you had a refresher course since? Yes No

41. If yes, how many refresher courses?

1 2 3 4 5 More than 5

42. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best, and 1 being the worst, how would you grade your own interviewing skills?

43. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best, and 1 being the worst, how would you grade your interviewing partners on average?

44. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best, and 1 being the worst, how would you grade the interviewing training you received.

45. Do you feel you could do with a refresher course on interviewing? Yes No

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out.

Employees Questionnaire

Employees Questionnaire

Here at ----- we are always striving to improve the way we operate in every department of the business, at this moment in time we are concentrating on our recruitment and selection process. We would appreciate it if you could take 3 minutes to fill out this questionnaire and then return it in the envelope to the drop off box. We are keen for all employees to fill in this questionnaire so we can get a clear overview. We would like to assure everyone that their questionnaire is completely confidential and unidentifiable, so please do not hesitate in any of your answers. Thank you very much for your time.

Recruitment and Selection Process

1. Please tick the period of time you have worked here?

0-3mths 3-6mths 6-12mths 1-2yrs 2-3yrs 3-5yrs 5+

2. Can you remember who interviewed you? Yes No

3. If yes, who was it?

4. Did you do previous research on the company before the interview? Yes No

5. If yes, where did you obtain your information from?

6. Did you have any internal influence which may have helped you get the job? (e.g Friend or family member) Yes No

7. Did you know you had the job prior to your interview? Yes No

8. Did you know during the interview that you were going to get the job? Yes No

9. If yes, how did you know?

10. Were you told during the interview that the job was yours? Yes No

11. Roughly how long after the interview were you offered the job?

12. Have you ever helped somebody get a job here? Yes No

13. If yes, how did you go about it?

14. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best and 1 being the worst, how would you rate your interview?

Job Specification

15. Prior to being hired had you seen the job specification so you would know what the job entailed? Yes No

16. When was the last time you saw the job specification?

When hired Last training course Daily basis Can't recall

17. From reading the job specification was the job what it said it was? Yes No

18. How would you describe the job you do?

19. What would you describe as the most challenging part of your job?

20. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the most accurate, and 1 being the least, how accurate to the actual job do you think the job specification is?

