

Interview Techniques & Process used in Hospitality Industry

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Abstract: Interview is a most complex selection technique because its scope includes measuring the entire relevant characteristic and integrating and classifying all other information about the applicants. There are number of interviewing techniques being used like, preliminary interview, patterned interview, non directive interview, depth interview, group discussion interview, panel & stress interview. The objective of the research is to find out the most predominant interview technique and process being used in all the category of hotels

Index Terms – Hotel , Interview, Recruitment, Hospitality.

I. INTRODUCTION

The interview is the heart of the employment process. The personal interview, along with the application blank, continues to be used by almost every employer. It is a most complex selection technique because its scope includes measuring the entire relevant characteristic and integrating and classifying all other information about the applicants. In particularly all organization interviewing is used for a variety of purposes, including, selection, appraisal, disciplinary action, counseling and general problem solving.

Interviewing is meant, “deliberate active listening with a purpose to draw the other person out, to discover what he really wants to say, and to give a chance to express him freely”. According to Scott and others “ an interview is a purposeful exchange of ideas, the answering of questions and communication between two or more persons.”¹ An eminent author defines an interview as a “ conversation with a purpose”² and the purpose may be to “get information”, “to give information” and to “make a friend.”³ In other words an interview is an attempt to secure maximum amount of information from the candidate concerning his suitability for the job under consideration. It tries to achieve an exacting appraisal of an applicant, his previous experiences, and education, training and family background. It enables the interviews to judge certain qualities (manner and appearance, ability to speak, meet other people pleasantly and make a good impression on other) of the prospective candidates before he is selected.

In the selection process, interview serves the following purposes

- To cross- check or verify the information obtained in earlier steps
- To judge the candidate qualification and characteristic so as to decide whether or not to select him
- To give the candidate essential facts about the job and the company to enable him to decide intelligently whether he should or should not accept the employment
- To establish a rapport or mutual understanding between the company and the candidate and to promote the company’s goodwill.

Richard Calhoon observes “the interview makes three unique contributions to the selection process”⁴ First, it is the only way to see an applicant in action how he looks, his manner, his bearing. Second, it is the only way to witness how he interacts and how he responds, his way of thinking, the effects of his personality on other. Third it is perhaps the best way to get at the “will do” features of a performance-motivation, initiative, stability, perseverance, work, habits and judgments. The so-called “can do” aspect can be examined by

application test and reference checks. An important by product, unique to the interview, is the opportunity it affords to the management to identify with the application a factor that can be quite helpful for a new employee's ultimate success".

Interview Technique

Generally interview falls into seven categories:

- Preliminary Interview
- Patterned Interview
- Non Directive Interview
- Depth Interview
- Group Discussion Interview
- Panel or Board Interview
- Stress Interview

- **Preliminary Interview**

It is also called screening interview. The purpose is to decide through mutual information sharing whether a comprehensive interview is desired. In this interview, besides providing information about the job and the organization, preliminary information is sought on past work experience, education and motivation. Personnel people who, sometimes, involve people from the areas where the applicant is finally going to be placed generally conduct most of those interviews. This is usually done for jobs that are technical in nature.

- **Patterned Interview**

This is the most common method of interview. It is based on the assumption that, to be most effective every pertinent details bearing on what is to be accomplished, what kind of information to be sought or given, how the interview is to be conducted and how much time is to be allotted to it, must be worked out in advance.

Such interview is fully planned a high degree of accuracy and precision. Patterned interviews are a combination of direct and indirect questioning of the applicant in conjunction with the application blank and is considered to be much more accurate than less standardized interviews.

- **Non-Directive Interview**

In this interviewing technique, there is a minimum use of direct and specific question. In such interview, the applicant is asked some very general question, and may reply to these in any way he likes for a considerable length of time. Generally the candidate is encouraged to express himself on a variety of subjects, on his expectation and motivations, background and upbringing, interest etc. The interviewer look for trades of character and nature of his aspirations and his strengths, weaknesses and potentials.

- **Depth Interview**

The purpose of the depth interview is to get total information on an applicant in order to develop a comprehensive profile based on in-depth understanding of his personality. The typical subject discussed at such interviews includes the candidate's home life, education, previous experience aptitude and hobbies etc.

The interviewer provides instructional information about his organization, the nature of work, pay, opportunities for advancement, and demands likely to be made on the employee.

- **Group Discussion Interview**

It is a recently developed technique. In this interview technique the candidate are given certain problem and are asked to reach a specific decision within a particular time limit. The applicant enters in to group discussion, knowing that the interview is a test but to do not know which qualities are being measured or tested. The assumption underlying this type of interview is that “ the behaviour displayed in the solution of the problem is related to potential success in the job. The object is to see how well individuals perform on a particular task or in a particular situation”.

- **Panel Interview**

Interviewing candidates by a single person may not be effective, as he cannot judge the candidates in different areas/ skills. Hence, most organization invites a panel of experts, specialized indifferent disciplines to interview candidate. The great advantage of this interview is that it helps to coordinate the collective judgment and wisdom of members of the panel. This type of interview is done usually for supervisory and managerial position.

- **Stress Interview**

In the stress interview, the interviewer assumes a hostile role toward the applicant. He deliberately puts him on the defensive by trying to annoy, embarrass or frustrate him. The purpose is to find out how candidates behave in a stress situation, whether he loses his temper, get confused or frightened.

Interview Technique being used in Selected Hotels

The employment interview has been most widely used and probably the most important step in the selection process. There are number of interviewing technique being used by the hotels, but an attempt was made to find out the commonly used interviewing techniques being used in the selected hotel units. The result is shown in the following table:

Interviewing Techniques(Table No 3.9)

S.No	Interviewing Techniques	5star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Heritage	Unapproved	AV.%
1	Preliminary	50%	100%	40%	60%	---	72%	70%	61%
2	Patterned	80%	50%	50%	60%	---	100%	40%	64%
3	Depth	100%	50%	80%	40%	---	85%	20%	58%
4	Group	60%	---	---	---	---	---	---	10%
5	Panel	60%	100%	40%	20%	---	71%	10%	30%
6	Stress	20%	50%	---	---	---	14%	---	10%

The general overview of the above analysis reveals that the interview techniques are used in combination for conducting the interview but the most widely used combination are patterned interview, preliminary interview and depth interview which represent 64%, 61% and 58% respectively because interview is designed to intensively examine the candidates proficiency and there should be a high degree of accuracy and precision.

The analysis further signifies that more than 40% of the heritage, five star, three star hotels are using panel interview technique because it helps to coordinate the collective judgment and wisdom of members of the panel and also helps to identify how the candidate reacts in conversation. The above analysis also suggest that stress and group interview techniques are also used but for only management level selection and which is less than 10% of selected hotels units.

Interview Process

An effective interview involves the following sequences of steps:

(a) **Preparation for the interview:** Advance preparation is essential for a successful interview. It will enable the interviewer to cover all-important aspects and to remember the necessary points. The following arrangement should be made before the interview begins:

- Determining the objective of the interview
- Choosing the appropriate type of interview to be used
- Acquainting oneself about the candidate
- Determining the type of information to be obtained
- Selecting the candidates to be interviewed by checking and comparing their application and test scores

(b) **Physical setting:** The place of interview should be both private and comfortable. It should be neat and clean, well lightened and ventilated. It should be free from noise and interruption.

(c) **Conducting the interview:** This step is the heart of the interview process. The activities involved in it are as follows

- Establishing rapport with the candidate and gaining his confidence
- Getting complete and accurate information
- Recording the observation and impression of the candidate in the interview assessment forms. Such notes will indicate to the candidate the interviewer's interest and thereby encourage him to talk freely. These notes will also be helpful in evaluating the candidate later.

During the study it was tried to find out whether the candidate are assessed on interview rating sheet or not. The result is shown in the following table:-

Interview Rating sheet (Table No 3.10)

S.No.	Category of Hotel	Interview rating sheet being used	Interview rating sheet not being used
1.	5 Star	Yes	---

2.	4 Star	Yes	---
3.	3 Star	Yes	---
4.	2 Star	---	Yes
5.	1 Star		Yes
6.	Heritage	Yes	---
7.	Unapproved	---	Yes

From the above table it is quite evident that 5 star, 4 star, 3 star and heritage hotels are using interviewing rating sheet to assess the candidates profile and it was also found that, they have their own designed rating sheet as per the requirement of the organization. But 2 stars and unapproved hotels are not using the rating sheet; the interview process is carried on the candidate application.

(d) **Closing the interview:** “The close of the interview is as significant as its beginning. The interview is a trying situation for the candidate. Therefore it should end with a happy note without any awkward or embarrassing situation”¹²

(e) **Evaluation of result:** After the interview is over, the interviewer based on the observations, impression, and information collected during the interview evaluates the results. But weightage should be given to the information collected through application form, tests and other steps.

Interview process being used in Selected Hotel Unit

A successful interview of candidate is a specialized technique, which requires a thorough grounding in the art of conducting interviews. An attempt was made to identify whether the selected unit have developed a process of conducting interview. The result is shown in the following table:

Interviewing Process (Table No 3.11)

S.no	Interviewing Process	5star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Heritage	Unapproved	AV.%
1	Preparation of Interview	50%	---	50%	60%	---	57%	30%	53%
2	Physical Setting	50%	---	20%	40%	---	28%	30%	37%
3	Expert are Invited	---	---	---	20%	---	---	---	10%
4	Evaluating Procedure	50%	50%	20%	40%	---	57%	10%	37%
5	Preparation of Guidelines	50%	50%	20%	40%	---	14%	---	28%
6	Follow All the above	50%	50%	20%	---	---	---	---	13%
7	No Process Followed	---	---	20%	40%	---	71%	60%	28%

The above analysis highlights that more than 20% of three star, four star, five star hotels are using interview process, which are being used by the corporate world. In comparison to this more than 25% of the hotels give importance to preparation of interview, physical setting arrangement for the candidate, developing of guidelines for the interview and evaluating.

Generally it has been absorbed that outside experts are not invited to conduct interview but the experts are called from within the organization. It is also noticed that 20%, 40%, 28%, 50% of the three star, two star, heritage and unapproved hotels respectively do not have any defined interviewing process.

Conclusion

It has been observed that hotels are using the same traditional interview techniques therefore it is suggested that hotels should also use modern interview techniques such as conducting interview through telephonic conversation, tel-conferencing, interview through internet etc. It is also been observed that outside experts are not invited to conduct interview therefore it is suggested that hotels should call the experts from other group hotels, academician from the hospitality education institution and psychiatrist to assess the psychology of the candidates.

Population and Sample Methodology

To do a meaningful and in-depth study a sample of 40 hotels, which represents the universe of different class of hotels, that includes five star, four star, three star, two star, heritage and unapproved hotel from Rajasthan. The rationale behind this sample is to have proper representation and can have a comparative study.

Data and Sources of Data

The study was of descriptive, analytical and diagnostic in nature and comprises the essential elements of social sciences, enquiring to explain the organizational culture. This explorative study is based on both primary & secondary data. The primary data has been collected with the help of a structured questionnaire and through direct interviews with hotels Human Resource Manager/ General Manager/ Managing Director/ Employees. Secondary data has been collected from internal records of the hotels as well as from other published sources.

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