

YEAR	TRIPOS	PAPER NO. & TITLE	NAME OF AUTHOR
2017	Engineering Tripos Part IIA	3E5 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	Andreas Richter

1 (a) Describe structured and unstructured interviews for use in personnel selection, and explain the differences between the two. [20%]

- Students should describe unstructured as well as different forms of structured interviews (e.g., behavioural and situational interviews), and explain the differences between them.
- Better essays will properly describe the nuanced differences between different types of structured interviews.

(b) Evaluate structured and unstructured interviews with respect to validity, reliability, utility and fairness. [40%]

- Unstructured interviews are the least valid and reliable. But they can be substantially improved by structuring and formalizing the interview and evaluation process better, using more than one interviewee, and by training interviewers. The utility of structured interviews is debatable, because the process of creating structured interview guides and questions is costly and time-intensive. Fairness will benefit from valid and reliable tools, therefore structured interviews are, but possibly are not perceived by interviewees, as fairer.
- Better essays will provide a more complete and exhaustive answer to this question.

(c) For which purposes should organisations use the Big 5 and the MBTI? [40%]

- The MBTI should not be used at all for personality testing, as it is not reliable and valid (i.e., does not predict performance). Moreover, it captures rather preferences than personality.
- The Big 5, although valid, show only modest effect sizes in predicting job performance. Therefore personnel selection decisions should not be exclusively based on the Big 5. Rather, this tool should be used in combination with other tools (such as assessment centers, interviews, etc.) for personnel selection.

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- Both tools, however, can be used for a number of different purposes, such as team and leadership development, managing diversity, cross-cultural training, etc. For these applications, both tools could form the basis for self-reflection, and hence be very useful to employees.
- Better essays will correctly cover these nuanced fields of application.

2 (a) Explain Goal Setting Theory. How should managers implement goal setting? Corroborate your answer with two examples. [30%]

- A correct explanation of the theory should precede a discussion on how to best implement goal setting. Examples used in class are Management by Objectives, SMART objectives, and the book also mentions ProMES (the Productivity Measurement Enhancement System).
- Better essays will discuss that goal setting has differential effectiveness depending on factors such as culture, short- versus long-term goals, as well as self-efficacy, goal difficulty, goal specificity, and participation in goal setting.

(b) What are the shortcomings of Goal Setting Theory? How could other motivation theories be used to overcome these shortcomings? Explain your answer. [30%]

- Key shortcomings relate to factors such as time horizon, applicability to various types of work that may not easily be translated into tangible goals, and limited applicability in certain cultures.
- Better students will discuss motivation theories that address motivation factors that have not been covered by Goal Setting Theory, such as job characteristics and needs, and how they can be combined with goal setting.

(c) “Expectancy Theory is important for designing financial incentives.” Discuss. [40%]

- Students should discuss the relevance of different aspects of Expectancy Theory for designing concrete financial incentives.
- Students should also discuss where Expectancy Theory falls short in guiding how to design concrete financial incentives.
- This question is largely transfer, better essays will provide more elaborate and exhaustive answers.

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3 (a) What are the components of employee performance? Illustrate your answer with one example for each component. [20%]

- The different facets of employee performance have been described in class and course book.

(b) Explain contamination and deficiency in the context of performance measurement. How can managers minimise both? [30%]

- Both terms have been explained in class. How managers can minimize them is to a large extent a transfer question. Better students may come up with suggestions including training, standardization, rating formats, etc.

(c) Briefly describe four common problems with performance measures. How are rater errors different from rater biases? Select five common rater errors, describe them, and explain how they might affect the accuracy of performance ratings negatively. What can managers do to overcome them? [50%]

- These four common problems are summarized on a slide from class, and need to be properly explained.
- Rater errors (e.g., Halo effects) concern general biases that people have, and are not specific to any particular social group. Rater biases target a particular group (e.g., minorities, men/women, etc.)
- Seven rater errors are covered in class & course book. Students need to properly explain five.
- Better students may properly explain a number of measures how to address rater errors. Rater training, rater awareness, standardization of the evaluation process, and rating formats are some examples students may apply.

END OF PAPER