

Talent Management and
Alternative Assessment Centre Models:
Construct Validity Evidence for
Different Assessment Centres for
Different Purposes

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Assessment Centre Methods: Sustaining Evidence-Based Talent Management

- **Different** AC methods
- **Evidence-Based**
- **Talent** Management



What is Talent Management?

What are organizations trying to do?

What are different ways ACs designed?

**What different AC methods are
advocated?**

**What is the evidence to support claims
for different AC models about TM?**



Purposes of this presentation

- Articulate **components** of talent management
- Describe **models** of the AC method
- Summarize **evidence** for different AC models for different talent management purposes
- Identify **gaps** in our knowledge
- Help: **Practitioners** make decisions about ACs
 - **Consultants** clarify claims
 - **Researchers** focus attention



Two common comments

“Assessment centers contribute to talent management”

“Traditional [dimension-based] assessment centers do not have construct validity to measure managerial competencies. Alternative approaches are better.”



Talent Management

“Old wine in new bottles?”

Personnel Management

Human Resource Planning

Strategic Human Resource Management

Human Capital Management



Talent Management

- War for Talent: recruitment, attraction
- On-boarding: external selection, socialization
- Fast-tracking: Early identification of management potential
- Succession planning
- Promotion
- Developmental planning: diagnosis of needs
- Management training
- Leadership development

Goal of Presentation: articulate what is meant by “talent management”



Assessment Center Models

- Dimension-Based ACs
- Task-Based ACs
- Mixed-Model ACs



Common Elements of AC Methods

- Job analysis/competency modeling
- Observation and classification of behavior
- Multiple assessment techniques
- Simulations
- Multiple, trained assessors
- Systematic process of observing, classifying, rating, integrating, and reporting behaviors

Assessment Center Guidelines



Elements of each AC model **differ**:

- Job analysis/competency model used
- Dimensions/tasks/roles used for structure
- Types and fidelity of simulation exercises
- “Behaviors” observed and rated
- Ratings given
- Final outcome of AC
- Feedback given, to whom?



Special Features of **Dimension**-based ACs

- Based on analyses of tasks, attributes, and competency models
- Assumes persons have stable attributes
- Use generic exercises
- Scoring can be arithmetic or consensus
- Output is dimension scores and, maybe OAR

Jansen in Jackson et al; Schlebusch & Root



Special Features of **Task**-based ACs

- Based on task analysis
- Use high-fidelity exercises
- Scoring based on behavior related to specific exercise
- Overall exercise rating is arithmetic average

Thoresen & Thoresen in Jackson et al



Special Features of **Mixed**-model ACs

- Assumes both person (dimension) and situation (exercise) determines behavior
- Each candidate's perception of exercise determines responses
- Uses critical tasks as simulation tasks
- Expects split ratings, e.g. 4/2
- Average and variation of dimension scores and exercise scores are meaningful

Bank et al in Jackson et al



What is the **evidence**
to support claims of the value of
different AC models and methods
to achieve
specific talent management objectives?



Varieties of Evidence of Validity

- Many forms of empirical evidence
- All contributes to “Construct validity”
- Content representativeness
- Internal correlations of components of AC
- Correlations with alternative measures of similar and different attributes: “nomological net”
- Criterion correlations
- Social validity, acceptability, fairness, etc.

AERA et al., Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests



Talent Management	Dimension-Based AC	Task-Based AC	Mixed-model AC
War for talent Recruitment	+		
On-boarding: Selection	++		
Fast-tracking: EIMP	+++		
Succession planning	+		
Promotion	+++	+	+
Development planning: diagnosis	++	++	+
Training	+	+	



Evidence for **Dimension**-Based ACs In Peer-Reviewed Publications

- OARs predict variety of long range criteria
- Dimension ratings predict job performance ratings
- PEDRs show construct validity
- Dimension ratings show external construct validity
- Ratings show minimal group bias
- Participation in DBACs results in development of individuals and organizations

Thornton & Rupp (2006) and in Jackson et al; Chapters in Povah & Thornton



Evidence for **Task**-Based Acs In Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Internal analyses show evidence that exercises affect performance more than dimensions
- Inter-rater reliability of checklist ratings
- 2 criterion validity studies
“less research” “very limited”

Lance in Jackson et al



Evidence for **Mixed**-Model ACs In Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Internal analyses of post-exercise dimension ratings show
 - Across-exercise dimension performance
 - Exercise-specific performance
 - Dimension performance within exercises
 - Overall general performance
- Both dimensions and exercises predict salary and job performance

Hoffman in Jackson et al



A Goal of This Presentation

Promote more refined assertions of the effectiveness of different forms of ACs to achieve different talent management objectives

State: Purpose, structure, evidence



Preferred statements:

“Assessment centers for early identification of management potential which evaluate broad performance dimensions with relatively generic exercises have demonstrated content, predictive, and construct validity evidence.”

“Task-based assessment centers evaluating specific skills demonstrated in assessment techniques which approach work samples have demonstrated content and construct validity evidence.”



Three “take away” points:

1. There are, at least, three models of ACs, with some similar and some different features. Within each model, there are many variations.

“There’s no one best way!”

NOTE: there are many bad ACS!

2. There is extensive construct validity evidence to support many applications of dimension-based ACs.

“Traditional assessment centers have construct validity.”

3. There are varying amounts of evidence to support the three types of ACs for various talent management applications.

Ask the AC proponent... “Where’s the beef?”

“What’s your evidence?”



References

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Thank You!

Questions/Comments

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