

large numbers of individuals who cannot, but just as surely there will be others who can. The proof of this is to be found in the careers of hundreds and thousands of individuals, now holding positions of leadership in all walks of life, who were at one time working in the humblest of jobs.

I believe that a questionnaire and a technique such as that suggested by Mr. Hull will frequently produce better results in locating subexecutive, or even executive, material when used within the organization than when used in interviewing applicants from outside. If this is not true a complete overhauling is needed either of the questionnaire or of the employment department.

Might it not be advisable to allow those candidates for the president's position who will not answer the questionnaire to continue as candidates? Certainly no organization would consider the buying of materials or the purchase of property if the owner or agent advised that it was too good a value to be investigated. Why then should an organization consider the employment of a president who in his own estimation is too great a value to be investigated or, as it is usually put, is "too big" to adjust himself to the rules of the game? I wonder if such people are not frequently in reality too little.

Probably it is too much to expect that all presidents will possess the qualities of true simplicity and humility characteristic of real greatness, but certainly it is not too much to expect that every personnel department be working toward the application of scientific principles in the selecting of presidents as well as in the selecting of clerks.

The question has been raised as to whether or not Mr. Hull's technique is good, or whether it is practical. May it not be possible that it is much more important to consider whether or not a careful technique is preferable to no technique at all? I doubt if Mr. Hull would recommend that those of us who are faced with the problems connected with daily placements and promotions use for all cases the specific technique which he has worked out, or a similar one. There are too many factors to be given consideration, one of the most important of which is that of time.

Just recently in our own company we had the problem of filling one of the most important positions in the organization. As I believe is usual, everyone was much concerned, but hardly any two

people were in agreement as to the best method of approach in getting the right man for the job. The income was adequate to command the services of the majority of the outstanding men in that particular type of work, irrespective of their present connections. Progress was almost nil, however, until we developed a technique, which consisted simply in rating available men both within and outside the organization one against another in terms generally in use and understood by the company executives. These terms were by no means units, as defined by Mr. Hull. In fact, most of them were not even simple compounds. The terms were as follows and were grouped as indicated:

*Group I.* General qualifications of importance when considering individual for any major position

Business personality	
Character	Thoroughness
Education (in school and since)	Aggressiveness
Native intelligence	Leadership capacity
Physical strength (health)	Executive ability
The will and the willingness to work	Ability to get things done
Ambition combined with vision	Imagination
	Creative ability
	Business judgment

*Group II.* General qualifications particularly important for persons in positions where co-ordination with others is essential

Pliability	Disposition
Dependability	Unselfishness
	Tact

*Group III.* Technical qualifications particularly important from the standpoint of the specific position to be filled

Sales promotion ability	Advertising ability
Display ability	Knowledge of merchandise

Knowledge of company, its methods, policies, and personnel

In our consideration we gave greater weight to some of the factors than to others. For instance, we rated character as of greater importance than business personality, and dependability as of greater importance than tact.

Just a glance at the above list will indicate that one factor is dependent upon another, or possibly upon several others, and that definitions are lacking. To me, the important thing, however, is that this procedure helped us to reach a decision based

on a rather careful study of the available candidates. As a result we promoted one of our own men and he is doing an excellent job.

I feel sure that some such technique as Mr. Hull's should be of great assistance in placement and promotion.

### Closure

IT IS pleasant to note that in the discussion of this paper there is no doubt raised by these very practical gentlemen as to the entire desirability of having more scientific methods for appraising personality. Neither is there any serious question of the propriety of the general method of approach to this problem. The principal questions raised concern difficulties of practical application.

With this questioning the speaker is in entire accord. After a principle itself is established, it often requires years of study and experimentation to perfect adequate methods of applying it to all appropriate situations. In developing these methods, discussion is of the highest value. The able and thoughtful comments on this paper cannot but illuminate the course of future progress.

There were however certain points raised which may permit of further brief comment at this time.

One of these was whether the personal questionnaire does not suffer seriously from the disabilities of the usual self-rating scale. An examination of the questions shows that the personality questionnaire is not a self-rating scale in the usual sense. The applicant is not asked to rate himself on a trait or quality as such, nor is he given the name of the quality in question. He is merely asked to tell his usual degree of response to a typical situation, stated or implied. Statistical analysis of the results gives considerable evidence that this can be done quite accurately. This is not the case with self-rating on "traits."

A further evidence of the improved results from this form of question is furnished by a comparison of the replies by references to similar situational questions. In the case of the Dodge Fellowship, for example, using situations as criteria, the ratings of the references were practically unanimous on some points and varied comparatively little on most others. Part of this improvement is doubtless due to the more objective nature of the questions and part to the diminution of the "halo" effect often found in rating a series of general traits.

Still another reason for the increased accuracy of the present technique is probably the fact that the situation responses pertain to unit qualities only. This avoids the confusion arising in an attempt to rate a compound characteristic. It has already been shown that where two or more basic impulses are joined, erratic and uncertain ratings are produced. The two investigators who spent three years trying to measure honesty were trying to rate one of the highest factored compounds known.

Another question was whether there are any such things as traits at all. The squabbles of the psychologists on this point seem to be of little practical interest to us in the present discussion. Every employment man tries to appraise in an applicant certain points of individual difference residing in the personality and abilities of the man. Whether he calls them traits or not makes no material difference. He knows that a certain job requires a man who is characteristically self-reliant, for example, and looks for evidences of this quality.

It is true that a man's responses will vary in strength with different situations, due to the presence of other influences and other degrees of stimulation. But the employer knows also that a given job-situation will evoke quite a different response from the self-reliant man and one who is not, if the job calls for this quality. He therefore chooses the man, other things being equal, whose normal behavior best fits his job-situation in this respect.

The difficulty suggested in getting foremen and others to understand the meaning of the unit characteristics disappears largely when these are presented as types of behavior. Experience shows that department heads readily grasp the appropriate expressions in the operations of their own departments, and not only offer intelligent and logical percentage ratings on basic qualities in man- and job-analysis, but eagerly reach for the pencil to enter the ratings themselves.

When confronted with a compound characteristic, however, they are more hesitant. The word carries too many diverse connotations in terms of job-behavior. This is one of many evidences that work with basic terms is easier and more accurate.

In conclusion, the essential proposal of this paper is to reduce human nature to its simplest and most measurable terms; and to treat jobs not only as aggregations of performances but also as differentiated forms of normal human behavior.