

# Methods of professional recruitment in agrarian companies

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*The terms “recruitment” and “personnel selection” are analyzed. The method of personnel selection is suggested. The basic methods for personnel evaluation are defined.*

Keywords: recruitment, personnel selection, methods of personnel selection, methods of personnel evaluation.

## I. Introduction

The agricultural sector of Ukraine is one of the most labour-consuming, prospective and demanding sectors because it gives food to the mankind, raw materials to the industry and a large number of medicinal plants to the medicine. Therefore, the development of the agricultural sector is one of the high-priority objectives nowadays. Unfortunately, there are several problems in agriculture that prevent agricultural companies from moving forward and achieving the desired results. One such problem is human resources of the companies, namely, a large number of unskilled personnel, who gained their knowledge by means of “trial-and-error method” and not by means of receiving a degree at the higher educational establishments.

An experienced personnel is one of the main factors that determines the growth of the company, the increase of its competitive advantages and company’s efficiency, the quality of customer service and their satisfaction. Modern production increasingly requires such qualities from both the managers and the workers. These are the qualities that have not been formed in a continuous-mass production but also have deliberately been kept to a minimum that allowed simplifying the work and reducing the labour cost. These qualities include high professional skills, ability to make independent decisions, group interaction skills, responsibility for the quality of the finished products, knowledge of technology and organization of production. Production depends on the quality of the workforce, the efficiency of its use and its involvement in the company’s business. Unfortunately, in Ukraine at the present stage of economic development, the situation of human resources in agriculture is very difficult: the old professionals quitted, the flow-in of new ones decreased in recent years, which is caused by low wages and improper attention of the Ukrainian management to this sphere in general. One of the problems due to which there is no improvement in human resources is low allocation of the graduates, young professionals. One in four graduates, who are assigned to work in agriculture, do not start working and almost half of them quit during the first year of work, shifting to other areas of production [1]. Particularly difficult situation is with management personnel, as many company managers

have no professional training that would help them to work efficiently. Most company managers were the heads of the former collective farms and they could not get proper theoretical training while their studying. Theoretical training together with their work experience would contribute to a more competent leadership as required by economic conditions in the new competitive environment. Managing staff performs key functions in the company managing and the company success depends on its competence. Therefore, managing staff should have deep theoretical knowledge in economic market, be able to think creatively, make prudent and sound decisions in difficult situations. Under these conditions, the need for professionals in business and especially the need for the “new” professionals increases. Respectively, agricultural companies should pay more attention to human resource issues, including improving the process of recruitment and selection of personnel, because it depends on how the team will be formed and how smoothly it will work.

According to Sytnik N.I., the selection of candidates is the initial phase, which aims to create “selection base”, i.e. to make contact with a group of people, who due to their competence can apply for the vacant position and are interested in it [4]. Fedulova L.I. states that: “Recruitment is the process of involving the workers to help filling the vacancies” [6]. As for J. Ivantsevychi’s and A.A. Lobanov’s point of view: “Recruitment is a set of actions, which are used by an organization to employ candidates, who have opportunities and views needed to help the organization to achieve its goals” [3]. Kirichenko O.A. believes that: “Recruitment is a set of actions aimed at employing candidates, who possess the qualities necessary to achieve the company’s goals” [2]. Krushelnytska O.V. indicates that: “Recruitment is a system of measures implemented by a company in order to employ personnel of certain qualification to achieve its goals. Recruitment is one of the components of HR management, which is expressed by set of management decisions that have a decisive and lasting impact on the company. Recruitment is relatively expensive action that takes much time and needs some experience. Recruitment is always a compromise between the desired and the actual; it cannot be achieved in itself” [3]. In our opinion, the concept of Sytnik N.I. and Krushelnytska O.V. is closest to the truth as recruitment is the initial stage, the main task of which is to allocate those applicants who can be later selected to hold the vacant seats. It should be noted that some money is invested in the recruitment of employees and should be effectively used. One of the important company’s tasks is to analyze a set of actual and desired number of employees which workplaces require.

In contrast to the recruitment, personnel selection aims to identify specific individuals, who meet all vacancy requirements. Krasnoshapka V.V. states that: “Personnel selection is a process of studying occupational and psychological qualities of an employee to determine his ability to perform his duties at a certain workplace or office, and finally selection of the most proper candidates, considering their qualification, specialty, abilities and

interests that meet company's goals" [3]. J. Ivantsevychi and A.A. Lobanov define personnel selection as a process by means of which an organization chooses people from a number of applicants, who fit best to the vacancies and labour conditions [5]. Currently, the agricultural sector as all other areas of the economy has problems with effective recruitment: there are no efficient methods of employee selection, companies may not be correct (according to their needs) in making employment requirements and there is a low return on personnel costs. Due to above, inexperienced, low-skilled, and non-professional people are employed. A very common situation is when relatives or someone familiar with the company's management or employees are employed, thus ignoring all requirements applicable to the vacancy. As a result, we get unskilled employees, additional cost for personnel training, conflicts among employees. All that leads to problems in the company's activities: flaws in the manufacturing process, defects, downtime, claims and as a result, lower profits and even losses. Companies often hire employees who fit all the requirements - have higher education, work experience, etc., but in reality they hire unqualified staff, which is incapable of performing their duties. These are consequences of inefficient recruitment.

To ensure that the company is developing successfully, an efficient method for personnel selection should be used. That will meet the company's needs and specify the requirements to applicants. We suggest carrying out the selection of candidates in the following sequence: CV analysis; questionnaire preparation and questioning; preparation and conduct of interviews with HR managers and supervisors; procedure preparation and evaluation of a candidate for the vacant position; analysis and verification of the a candidate's documents; selection of the best candidate; job offer.

The first stage of the selection process is to analyze the CV. CV analysis is a very labour- and time-consuming operation in personnel selection process. However, it can help to "eliminate" many candidates who do not meet the requirements, thus saving time and money for the following personnel selection procedures. CV analysis helps to characterize a candidate and identify his strengths and weaknesses:

1. Precision and consistency of CV structure may indicate good analytical skills and abilities;
2. Accurate and consistent description of duties may indicate deep and systematic understanding of the subject matter of the work;
3. Language and style of information helps to form an idea of the general culture, the ability to express thoughts in writing;
4. Holistic analysis of the CV information helps HR manager to understand personal traits of a candidate, his self-attitude and attitude to the employer, the adequacy of self-assessment;
5. Frequency of job change often indicates problems related to social and professional adaptation but it does not mean that you have to reject the candidate without knowing the cause of such frequent changes and reasons for dismissal;

6. The length of occupational work may be a factor that indicates steadiness of professional skills.

In the process of the CV analysis primary attention is paid to education. General course is determined (technical, humanitarian, economic), education level (higher, incomplete higher, secondary) and then compliance of education with the requirements of the vacant position are assessed. Last but not least is work experience. First of all, the work experience is assessed by the last (current) workplace of an applicant. If a candidate worked for a large famous company, which name is already talking about a certain degree of a candidate, it is sometimes enough to invite such person for an interview, where he can tell more about his strengths. If the company's name does not sound familiar, then company's activities should tell something about a candidate. Total experience and professional experience are estimated. Often companies require an applicant to have at least three years of work experience because during this time employees get the necessary skills and abilities to perform their professional duties. However, three years are relevantly conventional figures as intellectual abilities of all people are different: some need five years to acquire skills and some have the skills to work right after graduation. It is equally important to analyze achievements, however, one should take into account only those that relate to career (success in education is also considered here as a part of career). This is important information for understanding the applicant's personal portrait, his life goals and values. If the vacant position requires language skills, knowledge of computer programmes, driver's license, these skills should be also analyzed. An important characteristic of an applicant is personal information and how detailed it is given. Typically, family people have more responsible attitude to their profession and appreciate their job.

If HR manager likes an applicant's CV, an applicant will be invited to take part in a questionnaire. Questionnaire is a written survey on specially prepared paper sheets. Questionnaire is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to get the information about an applicant. An application form gives the first impression of an employee and gives an idea of his capabilities. It is possible to get and analyze the following information by means of an application form: the personality of the applicant (gender, age, education, occupation, and family status), the facts of consciousness (thoughts, motives, expectations, plans, value judgments) and the facts of behavior (real actions, steps and their results). Questionnaire should not be too complicated and contain a lot of questions, because applicants may get tired of describing their qualities and will answer questions in the brief and "short" manner, which will not allow HR manager to discern applicant's personality.

After "elimination" of candidates by analyzing their CVs and questionnaires, another complicated and significant stage of interviewing starts. The interview is one of the most common methods of selection and evaluation of personnel. With the external simplicity of use, it is one of the most labour-consuming processes,

which requires mandatory training of a manager who holds an interview. The main purpose of the interview is to provide information, allowing to assess whether a candidate is suitable for this vacancy (i.e., to assess the professional suitability of an applicant (professional knowledge and skills, business, individually psychological and physiological characteristics); to determine how this candidate stands out from all those, who applied for vacant positions (which qualities and skills predominate and which, however, need further development; whether these qualities are significance for the vacant position; whether the employment further growth is possible; whether the vacant position is the “step forward” for an applicant or he has “grown out” of the estimated position long time ago); to determine whether information provided by a candidate is true (meaning only the initial evaluation of the information reliability). It is also very important not only to determine whether a candidate complies with the required qualification, but also to find out, how a new person “fits” to the corporate culture of the company, whether he is able to adopt the principles and standards of behavior applicable in the company. It is best to create a friendly atmosphere of mutual understanding, allowing a candidate to get relaxed a little bit and be able to talk openly. And meantime, you should carefully watch the way the person behaves, what he says and the way he speaks, how constrained or relaxed, modest or boastful he is. An interview is a more difficult method of selection comparing to questioning, as you should deal particularly with a person but not with his writings. Nevertheless, the interview results may vary due to a person, holding it, because a person may be in a bad mood, or vice versa, in a good mood. Thus, subjectivity is the main drawback of the interview. Therefore, the interview shall be conducted by two people, i.e., HR manager and a supervisor. It is important due to the fact that supervisor knows all the specific nature of the work and may clearly name the qualities, which he needs from the future employee.

Then, the most difficult stage of selection of personnel comes - procedure preparation and evaluation of a candidate for the vacant position. The complexity of this stage is that there are many methods of personnel evaluation, but there is no multipurpose one that would be most efficient for the agricultural companies. The main difference between the methods lies in their costs, and thus, opportunities for agricultural companies to use one or another.

One of the commonly used methods for personnel evaluation is testing. The test is a standardized, short-time psychophysiological testing performed to evaluate and select personnel in the companies, institutions and organizations. To identify the specific characteristics of a person (object), a special programme, containing checklists, questionnaires and evaluation scores, is used. Tests allow you to determine the degree of attentiveness, understanding, creativity, thinking, the ability to synthesize facts and analyze an employee. Depending on their purpose, tests are divided into professional and psychological. Professional tests allow you to determine if

an employee fits the relevant profession. Psychological tests allow you to test the overall talent and vision, mental aptitude, special theoretical knowledge of an employee. Testing gives quite a general idea of a person and therefore cannot fully replace other types of personnel management.

For a systematic and detailed study of the personnel's qualities the so-called “according to deserts” evaluation system can be applied. It is used to compare employees with the people selected as a good example and compare employees with each other in terms of their total relative value for the company, to rank employees' assessments, starting from the best to the worst ones. This method can be used under conditions of the general formalization of written characteristics. In particular, they have to show intellectual qualities of a candidate (mind, breadth of interests, erudition, etc.), business qualities (organizational skills, prospective vision, the ability to solve urgent issues, efficiency, etc.), impulsive and volitional qualities (insistence on high standards, self-control, persistence, and independence), moral and ethical qualities (sense of responsibility, purposefulness, optimism, ambition).

Next widely used method is examination. Examinations help to predict how efficiently a candidate is able to perform a particular job. One type of the qualifying examinations involves determining ability to perform tasks related to the alleged work. As an example, demonstration of the ability to work with a computer, demonstration of language skills through oral reports and written works can be used. Another type of examination involves assessment of psychological characteristics, such as intelligence, curiosity, energy, honesty, self-confidence, emotional stability and attention to details. In order to make such tests helpful in selecting candidates, significant correlation between high grades received at the examinations and actual performance is required. Management should evaluate their examinations and determine, whether people, who do well on exams, are better employees than those gaining less scores.

Currently, the graphical method to examine handwriting becomes more significant. This method is based on the theory according to which handwriting is a relatively objective reflection of human personality and, therefore, using handwriting analysis allows to estimate various characteristics of a person, including the ability to perform defined production functions. Handwriting analysis as a method of initial selection of a candidate lies in its low cost but it uses unilateral approach, involving high risks of wrong assessment of candidate's potential. Therefore, it can be used among primary methods of selection but doesn't help to make final decision.

More often business qualities of candidates (discipline, responsibility, initiative, persistence, independence, etc.) are evaluated in an expert manner, using special questionnaires. Experts are individuals who know a candidate very well due to being coworkers; presence of three experts on each of three levels is preferable: senior managers, colleagues, subordinates. Business quality of the candidates, working in this company, can be evaluated.

However, instrumental measurement can be made. It is a method based on direct measurement of properties (e.g., responsiveness) or physiological parameters, using hardware tools, description of the measurement and data interpretation [5].

After evaluation of candidate's business and professional qualities by means of a chosen method, the final stage of candidate's evaluation starts: analysis and verification of the documents provided by a potential employee. First of all, you should verify his identity; the easiest way to do this is to check his passport. Then you need to clarify candidate's work experience using his employment records that contain information of previous employment, promotion, dismissal, reasons for dismissal, etc. Also, you need to check if a candidate meets professional requirements, that mean to check his educational documents (diploma of higher education, diploma of college, school certificate, etc.). It is worthwhile to find out, whether he had criminal convictions or was registered with the psycho- or neurological dispensary in the past.

After all checking procedures made by HR manager together with a supervisor, they choose the best candidate, which is a person who meets all the requirements imposed by an agricultural company.

### Conclusion

The advantages of this method of personnel selection:

1. It is relatively simple and suitable to apply in any agricultural company;
2. It is affordable as it does not require significant financial investment;
3. Indeed, it helps to select the best and worthy candidates;
4. It significantly reduces financial costs associated with training and development of unskilled employees that can be employed by the company in case of omitting this method of personnel selection. Moreover, it is better

to spend funds on skilled employees as their training, which is necessary due to continuous development process of equipment, technology, etc., brings more benefits to the agricultural company;

5. Recruitment of skilled and highly educated personnel will definitely improve business results of the company in all areas and quickly bring the company to a new level;

6. Applying this technique allows to select the best personnel, while leaving aside the employees who try to settle in the company through good connections, since these particular employees generally demonstrate the worst results;

7. Since the process of personnel selection contains a number of stages, in the end we get qualified personnel, willing to work in the company. That will significantly reduce rates of employee turnover and improve the financial performance of the companies.

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