

Interactive Realistic Job Preview: Managing Candidate Expectations and Engaging Future Applicants

Logi-Serve Science Team (Dr. Chris Cunningham, Chief Science Officer)

All organizations struggle with recruiting, selecting, and retaining qualified candidates, who become applicants, and eventually employees. In response to these challenges, organizations direct considerable resources to pre-hire methods of applicant screening and post-hire methods for employee performance management and development. These methods are essential to ensuring that employees have the necessary qualities and competencies to perform the core functions of the job, and to grow, learn and develop as aspects of the job change over time.

It takes more than pre-hire screening and post-hire development, however, to build and maintain the highest quality workforce. Even the best employees will leave if they do not fit within a particular organizational context or feel that the job they had initially applied for is not the one they are actually doing once hired. This being the case, there is an equally important third method for organizations to incorporate into their employee life-cycle management practices: Ensuring that job-seeking candidates have clear and accurate expectations of what it will be like to serve as an employee in the organization's actual work environment.

Substantial social and behavioral science research highlights the importance of expectation-setting for job seekers. Whether their expectations are met becomes a critical factor influencing actual employees' long-term success, engagement, and tenure. When job seekers' expectations of a position and an organization are met, the stage is set for a long-lasting, positive relationship. When such pre-hire expectations are not met, the likely outcome is dissatisfaction, limited tenure, and sub-optimal integration of the new hire into the organization.

Setting Realistic Job Seeker Expectations

Job seekers tend to be general information seekers first, turning attention to more specific details about organizations and specific jobs over time. Historically, job seekers have had to work very hard to locate the type of information needed to form realistic expectations before they decide to apply for an open position. Expectations are only formed around information – and not all information is of equal quality or value to a job seeker. In a work-related context, early-stage access to honest, accurate, and complete information about a job or work environment makes it possible for candidates to form accurate and realistic expectations about what the job will entail. Without being able to observe the actual job or speak with current employees in the role, how can a potential applicant determine if they are well suited for the position?

In response to this obvious need, organizations have used many techniques to provide potential applicants with information about job opportunities and the actual work environment. These efforts have



been studied extensively by scientists and practitioners for several decades now. It has become clear that not all information is equally valuable or relevant to potential applicants at an early stage of recruitment into an organization. What has emerged is clear evidence that honest, realistic information up front can help job seekers establish accurate, realistic expectations of a job and organizational work environment going into the application process. Such expectations can then help to keep job seekers engaged through the recruitment and screening process, into new hire orientation, and even into the ultimate work situation. The process of providing this type of information to job seekers at an early stage of their consideration of opportunities is commonly referred to as a realistic job preview (RJP), and sometimes as an expectation lowering procedure (ELP).

As can be seen in the recommended readings listed at the end of this white paper, research consistently shows that RJP and ELP methods can help job seekers establish and maintain accurate expectations about jobs and organizations. These expectations, in turn, help job seekers make better decisions about which jobs and organizations to pursue. Research also consistently demonstrates that the use of RJP can enhance an organization's image and trustworthiness in the eyes of job seekers. Increasing trust at an early stage can, over time, yield greater commitment and reduced turnover among those who are ultimately hired. Conversely, organizations that fail to provide open, honest information about jobs and working conditions are likely to create feelings of mistrust and ambiguity in job seekers. These sentiments may push a potential candidate away from applying for an open position and can contribute to early stage turnover when a new hire realizes that their poorly informed initial expectations are not met within the actual job or work environment.

As technology has changed and information seeking has become synonymous with internet searching, organizations have increasingly used the web to deliver information about jobs and working environments to potential candidates. While internet-based application procedures provide many benefits to organizations and job seekers alike, these procedures have also led to a glut of uninterested and unqualified applicants. The effective use of RJP can help reduce this phenomenon and channel higher quality job seekers into the actual applicant screening process funnel. However, while it is now easy to make such information available, most organizations have not seriously thought through how such information is perceived and interpreted by job seekers. The norm is also to present RJP-related information in a passive form, expecting job seekers to sift through the details and form their own expectations of a job and an organization.

Logi-Serve's Interactive Realistic Job Preview with Data Analytics

Evidence supports the use of RJP as an effective tool for helping candidates form accurate expectations about a job and organization. Despite this evidence, there have been few efforts to integrate and translate this evidence into a practical and affordable product offering. Organizations considering the use of RJP do not have clear guidance regarding where to begin or how to present information that will provide job seekers with the information they need to form realistic expectations before deciding to become applicants for a specific position.

In response to this need, Logi-Serve has developed an innovative, cost-effective way to manage job candidates' expectations and provide better information about open jobs before applicants enter the



recruitment funnel. Building on the existing scientific and business evidence base, Logi-Serve's interactive RJP is the first interactive tool to facilitate the effective, standardized use of RJP by organizations that want to reach job seekers with information that matters. This system is also designed to gather valuable data from job seekers that can inform organizations' decisions about recruitment and candidate sourcing.

Designed to function at the pre-application stage of recruitment, Logi-Serve's interactive RJP uses an engaging interface to teach candidates about critical elements of open jobs and organizations more generally. This system is designed to help job seekers self-select in or out of the more formal applicant screening process.

Logi-Serve's interactive RJP translates the decades of research on pre-hire expectation-setting and RJP into a structured, efficient system for engaging early-stage candidates. Below are some of the key features and differentiators of the Logi-Serve approach to RJP:

- ✓ Interactive instead of passive to more fully engages candidates from their first encounter with career options
- ✓ Less costly than video or computer-simulated alternatives
- ✓ Captures meaningful data about candidate activities and interests
- ✓ Easily tailored to any position and industry
- ✓ Captures realistic job features, and presents them in an honest but aesthetically pleasing way
- ✓ Customizable within hours
- ✓ No downloads or special software required for end-users
- ✓ Globally scalable
- ✓ Mobile-ready
- ✓ Available in any language
- ✓ Deployable across any operating system and html-capable device

For more information about this innovative solution for right-sizing candidate expectations via an interactive an engaging activity, contact Logi-Serve at 800-698-0403 or sales@logi-serve.com

Recommended Reading

Bangerter, A., Roulin, N., & Konig, C. J. (2012). Personnel selection as a signaling game. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 97*(4), 719-738. doi: 10.1037/a0026078

Bretz, R. D., & Judge, T. A. (1998). Realistic job previews: A test of the adverse self-selection hypothesis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 83*(2), 330-337.

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