



# **Employee selection processes for team oriented work environments**

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## ABSTRACT

Teams have become the strategy of choice when the volume of work or task complexity exceeds the capacity of an individual. Therefore the ability for individuals to work in teams is vital in the modern workplace. Consequently a critical lever in facilitating performance of teams is the selection process used to set up teams or bring on board new team members. Teamwork and employee selection have been separately researched. No studies have examined why selection processes have not adapted to include a more formal approach to selection for teams.

The information obtained from the literature served as the basis for construction of an *a priori* model for this study. This model shows the general approach used when selecting individuals through assessing alignment of skills and values, and it was used as a discussion framework during twenty expert interviews. The evaluation of the primary data allowed for validation and extension, for the creation of a more robust *a posteriori* model.

The strategies and practices highlighted by this evaluation have been integrated into a model which can be used for assessing whether organisation specific selection processes are adequate for constructing teams that assist in building competitive advantage.



## KEYWORDS

Selection

Recruitment

Teams

Teamwork

Fit

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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**10 NOVEMBER 2010**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

## 1.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

The number of organisations using team based structures is increasing (Salas, Cook & Rosen, 2008); therefore the ability for individuals to work in teams is vital in the modern workplace. A study by Devine, Clayton, Phillips, Danford and Melner (1999), shows that the best predictor of team performance is the level of interpersonal conflict within the team. Consequently a critical lever in facilitating performance of these teams is the selection process used to bring on board new team members.

Jackson and Schuler (2003) found that a poor hiring decision can cost as much as five times the employee's salary through a number of factors including poor employee performance, lost productivity in peers, unmet customer expectations, and subsequent labour turnover costs. Davis (2005) identifies that despite huge amounts of time and effort allocated to recruitment, the process produces an unacceptable failure rate that reduces business competitiveness and corporate profits.

The areas of team performance and employee selection have been separately researched. No studies have examined why despite the increased demands for high levels of teamwork and collaboration in the workplace, selection processes have not adapted to allow for selection of an individual for performance in a team.

## 1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Teams and teamwork have been extensively researched. Salas et al. (2008) present a review of the developments of team performance over the past 50 years and state that a golden age of interest in team research has emerged. Salas, Staggs, Burke, and Goodwin (2007) review of literature revealed more than 130 models and frameworks of team performance and they state that teams have become the strategy of choice for a number of situations including; when errors lead to severe consequences; when the task complexity exceeds the capacity of an individual; when the task environment is ill-defined, ambiguous, and stressful; when multiple and quick decisions are needed; and when the lives of others depend on the collective insight of individual members. Jones and George (1998) state, that organisations create teams to improve processes in order to gain a competitive advantage. This continued interest in teams and utilisation of team structures in the workplace illustrates the importance of teams in the modern workplace.

The definition of teams used in the study, proposed by Dyer (1984), is that teams are social entities composed of members with high task interdependency and shared and valued common goals. With advances in technology creating an increasing number of communication media as well as the continuing trend towards specialization of jobs within the workplace, it is clear that teamwork will continue to play a large part in the work environment in the future.

Selection is a step within the greater recruitment process, during which candidates are assessed for employment purposes. Similar to teamwork, recruitment and selection have been researched over decades and continue to be studied as it has become clear that effective recruitment is vital to organisational success (Carlson, Connerley & Mecham, 2002). Huselid (1995) demonstrated a positive relationship between low selection ratios and financial performance. Carlson et al. (2002) and Huselid (1995) also show that effective recruitment is critical to organisational success and financial performance.

In a previous study from 2004, Sekiguchi reviewed how Person-Organisation (PO), Person-Group (PG) and Person-Job (PJ) fit were taken into account in selection processes and found that selection processes have been focused predominantly on assessing PJ fit through competency based interviewing. While PJ fit is important for transactional jobs, PG fit and PO fit are important in relational jobs.

Sekiguchi (2004) found that PO fit was only reviewed informally during face-to-face interviews and that managers seem reluctant to abandon the interview, despite its lack of reliability, as they believe it is the best way of assessing PO fit. Therefore this practice of informally assessing fit continues, despite the best recruitment and selection techniques only having a validity coefficient of 0.6 (Dale, 2003), and the extensive available theory on fit. Kuipers, Higgs, Tolkacheva and de Witte (2009) found that only a small number of personality assessments have a significant relationship with team process or interaction.

Wilk & Cappelli (2003) concur in stating that employee selection processes in use focus on assessing individual criteria including structured interviews, individual work-assessments, academic performance, references and testing as defined by, rather than including an assessment of the individual's ability to perform within the teams they will become a part of.

### **1.3. RELEVANCE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

Many skills that are in demand in South Africa are also in short supply globally, compounding the South African skills shortage and leading to a global war for talent (Butcher, 2008). This results in organisations competing aggressively for talent (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2007).

Yet recruiting on skill alone can lead to poorly performing teams, as per the study by DeVaro (2010), high performers perform best when they are in groups that are comprised of individuals with a variety of skill levels and do not only include other high performers. Improving the approach used to compile teams can assist South African organisations to create high performing teams, even in a skills short market, by focusing on other candidate attributes and not on skills alone.

### **1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Fundamentally this research is looking to understand what processes can be used to determine how to assess a potential employee's ability to function and perform within the team that the individual is being selected for.

Therefore the main objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To examine what skills and values are important to an individual's ability to contribute to team performance.
2. To examine how individual's skills and values are assessed within selection processes.
3. To understand why selection processes have not adapted to include assessment of skills and values of individuals that can assist in improving team performance.

Further to these objectives, this research aims to create a deeper understanding of how selection for teams can be approached. The research will look to improve the approach to team selection in a way that can be incorporated into current selection processes to reduce the impact of related selection error and improve team and organisation performance as a consequence.

The literature review presented in the following section focuses on team performance and how selection processes can be adapted or enhanced to cater for selecting individuals who contribute to team performance. The review highlights the need for further empirical research into this field and provides the foundation for a *priori* model. This model was utilised as a data gathering tool and discussion point during the interviews. The data is anticipated to validate the model, allow further insight into the literature and develop thereon. A more integrated and comprehensive *a posteriori* model is expected to emerge from this research.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study focuses on two areas of academic and business research, namely teamwork and employee selection and therefore the literature review has two main sections. The section on teamwork explores past studies on teamwork to eventually understand what key attributes of individuals help them to perform in teams and contribute to team performance. The second section focuses on selection processes and aims to understand the overall model for selection as well as what selection methods are predominantly in use as shown by other studies. The shortfalls in current selection processes will be highlighted and an *a priori* model for selection will be proposed, which caters for areas suggested in the literature that are not covered by existing processes.

### **2.1. TEAMWORK IN THE MODERN WORKPLACE**

#### **2.1.1. THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK IN THE WORKPLACE**

Teamwork studies have been conducted for decades. One such study by Jones and George (1998), states that organisations create teams and improve processes to increase competitive advantage. Devine et al. (1999) shows that the number of organisations adopting team based structures is increasing. These studies are relevant as they indicate that the drive towards teamwork in the workplace has not only existed for some time, but is continuing and more importantly increasing.

With advances in technology creating an increasing number of communication media as well as the continuing trend towards specialization of jobs within the workplace, it is clear that teamwork will continue to play a large part in the work environment in the future.

### **2.1.2. TEAM STRUCTURES**

In order to better understand team structures, it is first important to clearly understand what constitutes a team. Dyer (1984) proposes a broad definition that still holds true today. According to Dyer, teams are social entities composed of members with high task interdependency and shared and valued common goals. Dyer continues to state that teams are usually organized hierarchically and sometimes dispersed geographically; they must integrate, synthesize and they need to coordinate and cooperate as task demands shift throughout a performance episode in order to accomplish their mission. This definition does not restrict teams based on the size or duration of their mission and includes any grouping of individuals, whether short-term or long-term, who are interdependent and are motivated to achieve a common objective.

If this definition is used, teams do not only include the formal structures put into place in most organisations, but also less formal groupings formed inter-organisation and intra-organisation, formed temporarily or for an on-going function, which have a common purpose. Wong and Burton (2000) evaluate the

characteristics of such teams. These teams are defined as virtual teams, as follows:

A set of culturally and organisationally differentiated members, who are:

- a. Grouped together temporarily;
- b. Physically dispersed;
- c. Connected by weak lateral ties; and
- d. Engaged in performing non-routine tasks.

As these definitions open up endless structural possibilities, individuals need to be able to work within different structures. Tarricone and Luca (2002) state that there is a growing emphasis on employees not just to do their job but to contribute to business success and that the team culture of business today places additional emphasis on the ability to work effectively within a team environment or as defined in Sekiguchi's (2007) study, a highly relational environment.

### **2.1.3. TEAM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Over time teamwork studies have developed a number of frameworks and models for team performance. These frameworks and models are reviewed by Burke, Stagl, Salas, Pierce, and Kendall (2006). Salas et al. discuss that the dominant approach underlying the models is the Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework.

Watrous, Huffman and Pritchard (2006) perform a study which examines the effect of turnover on performance. They argue that due to team task and member diversity, team performance must be measured on a time-scale basis in order to be able to make any meaningful comparisons. As performance evaluation is an ongoing process that team members are exposed to only after selection, this process is seen to have little bearing on selection and does not need to be further explored for this study.

#### **2.1.4. CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS**

Understanding what characteristics can be linked to team performance is vital to this study as it will assist in identifying what factors should be assessed during employee selection.

Of a number of models for teamwork, Cohen and Bailey (1997) provided a heuristic model of group effectiveness which has been extensively referenced in further studies and provides a comprehensive model of factors affecting team performance including environment, internal and external process, psychological traits and design features. Cohen and Bailey define design features as the structures of the task, group and organisation that can be directly manipulated by managers to create the conditions for effective performance. Therefore this study will focus predominantly on these features; this includes group composition, task design and organisational context.

Stewart (2006) concludes that team design is critical to team performance. His study looks at a number of factors in Cohen and Bailey's (1997) model including team task meaningfulness and shows that this is related positively to team performance. However Stewart (2006) shows that other variables are more strongly related such as team member cognitive ability, task autonomy and intra-team coordination. Other factors he also examined that relate to team performance are member heterogeneity and team size, and legitimacy of team rewards also included in Aime's, Meyer's and Humphrey's (2009) study on legitimacy of incentives. All these factors are explored further below:

*Cognitive ability and expertise.* Stewart (2006) looks at team composition and concludes that aggregated personality, cognitive ability and expertise correspond with team performance. Glew (2009) studies specific values selected on which to analyse teams and found that despite values, the strongest indicator of both individual performance within a team and overall team performance is the past performance of the individual or individuals. However Glew (2009) also shows that need based fit, which is often operationalised as values, impacts performance. The values equality and helpfulness were seen as strong predictors of performance in a team, indicating that performance in teams is a function of both skills and values.

In exploring values further in the team context, Glew (2009) found values to be a very strong predictor of cognitive and affective outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment and cohesiveness. This could lead to better team member retention

which should lead to better long-term performance. Therefore paying attention to these values in selection has merit. This can be related to Hofstede's (1991) concepts of individualism and collectivism in which he theorises that in an individualist society, the interests of the individual need to be aligned to the interests of the group for performance and in this case perhaps the searching for the equality and helpfulness values can assist the individual to maximise team performance, rather than just focusing entirely on personal performance and incentive. In a collectivist society these values are likely to be very high.

*Task autonomy.* Stewart's (2006) study shows that teams benefit from having greater information and freedom to make decisions. Interestingly this relationship is greater for physical work than for knowledge work. Cordery, Morrison, Wright and Wall (2010) investigate how autonomy and task uncertainty impact on team performance and deduce that task uncertainty can lead to reduced output and that autonomy is needed to enable performance on unpredictable task sets. Once again due to the more unpredictable nature of knowledge work, higher levels of autonomy are likely to have strong benefit on team performance.

*Intra-team coordination.* Stewart (2006) states that there are strong benefits of encouraging intra-team coordination when teams perform creative and dynamic or complex work. Due to the complex nature of the modern workplace, particularly for knowledge workers, the benefits of intra-team coordination can be applied more broadly. Other concepts in coordination can influence team performance, such as

strength of social network ties and leadership. Kilduff and Brass (2010) found that teams benefit from a moderate level of disconnectedness, showing that strong ties are not necessary for team performance. With regards to leadership, Stewart (2006) shows that particular types, specifically transformational and empowering leadership aid team performance. Transformational leaders are said to be capable of influencing others and this links strongly to Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas and Ammeter's (2004) study on leader political skills. In this study Ahearn examines leaders who have high political skill which is broken down into their ability to persuade, influence and control others. Ahearn et al. (2004) show that leader political skill accounts for a significant increment of team performance and Goleman (1998) states that effective leaders all have a high degree of emotional intelligence. In summary, stronger levels of intra-team coordination improves team performance and this can be facilitated by leaders who have good political skill.

*Member heterogeneity.* Although there is some benefit to team member heterogeneity when teams operate in uncertain and dynamic environments Stewart (2006), team member heterogeneity has a very weak relationship with team performance. In his study, Stewart supports this by examining past studies that reach similar conclusion.

*Shared Mental Models.* Bolstad and Endersley (1999) performed a study in which they tested the impact of the team having a shared mental model of each other's tasks on performance. The study concluded that performance was enhanced in

teams that had shared mental models of each other's tasks and goals. No similar studies are available that further test or challenge this research, so while it has some value further testing would be beneficial in order to validate the findings.

*Team size.* Stewart's (2006) meta-analytic study reviews a number of different types and sizes of teams and concludes that additional team members are only desirable when the team needs extra capacity or is required to interact with a complex environment. Stewart concluded that increased team size does not necessarily have any bearing on team performance.

*Legitimacy of reward.* Aime et al. (2006) discuss that dispersion in pay may help or constrain collective performance and that teams rewards affect team functioning. However rewards are seen as a factor affecting attraction, and then satisfaction and retention, and consequently do not have a direct bearing on selection.

In summary high performing teams are characterised by a few key factors including having members with high or appropriate levels of cognitive ability and expertise, by strong intra-team coordination and high task autonomy and meaningfulness. Additionally the team member values of equality and helpfulness may assist performance in the long term.

#### **2.1.5. ATTRIBUTES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO PERFORM WELL IN TEAMS**

Based on the above characteristics of high performing teams, it is important to understand the attributes of individuals that assist them to contribute to team

performance. Once these attributes are understood, selection processes can be assessed to determine if they are appropriate in design and implementation. It is important to note that company processes used to capitalise on individuals skills and values fall beyond the boundaries and influence of selection are not explored further in this study. The attributes of individuals that can be assessed during selection can be split into two areas as discussed below; these areas are individual skills and individual values. The Oxford English Dictionary classifies skill as *“a learned power of doing something competently”* and values as *“a rating in usefulness, importance, or general worth”*.

#### **2.1.5.1. INDIVIDUAL SKILLS**

As per the definition above skills are hard competence related attributes and are learned. Teams need the correct balance of skills that are appropriate for completion of a given task or for the performance of a function. The two areas cited above related to individual skills are cognitive ability and expertise along with strong intra-team coordination. While the correlation of individual skills to cognitive ability is obvious, the link to intra-team coordination requires some explanation. Strong intra-team coordination is predominantly achieved through communication (Stewart, 2006) and can relate to the team leader's ability to coordinate the team as in (Ahearn et al, 2004), as well as the communication skills of the individual team members. Therefore intra-team coordination is a skill needed particularly for individuals in leadership roles.

### **2.1.5.2. INDIVIDUAL VALUES**

Values relate back to Cohen and Bailey's (1997) model on team performance in the area of task design, specifically in one component which is task significance or meaningfulness of work. Therefore values relate to an individual's judgements about what is important in life and these values affect the way the individual acts on a day to day basis.

As above Glew (2009) shows that past performance is the most significant predictor of an individual's performance in a team. However Glew's study was based on short-term performance, so his study also highlights that personal values, specifically equality and helpfulness, are significant predictors of cognitive and affective outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment and cohesiveness. This is congruent with the model on Person-Environment (PE) fit where research has found that PE fit relates positively to job satisfaction, subjective career success, and intentions to remain as well as task performance and citizenship behavior (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006; Kristoff-Brown, Barrick and Stevens, 2005). In this case the organisation is the environment within which an individual operates; PO fit is defined as the congruence between individual and organisational values (Kristoff, 1996). Separate research on the model by Metzler (2006) was focused at the team level, PG. These models are based on assessing individual and team values. The research shows that PE and PG fit follow similar performance results, provided there is a fit in values between the individual and their team or

environment. Therefore fit must be assessed in order to achieve the outcomes listed above.

## **2.2. EMPLOYEE SELECTION**

Recruitment and selection have been researched over decades and continue to be studied as it has become clear that effective recruitment is vital to organisational success (Carlson et al., 2002). Huselid (1995) demonstrated a positive relationship between poor selection ratios and financial performance. The review below examines how existing selection processes cater for assessment of individuals for inclusion in teams.

Wilk and Capelli (2003) discuss that recruitment and selection processes include assessments of predominantly individual criteria through structured interviews, individual work-assessments, academic performance, references and testing for employee selection (Wilk and Capelli, 2003). Piotrowski and Armstrong (2006) surveyed 151 Fortune 1000 firms and found that while almost all of these large firms used traditional selection methods such as resume and reference checks, very few use selection methods that contribute to assessing fit or values, only 19% included personality tests and only 28% test or plan to test integrity and honesty.

Ryan and Tippins (2004) discuss what recruitment methods and section tools work and highlight the need for selection method training for human resource practitioners and managers. Dale (2003) supports this in saying that some

managers receive training but usually it is only on interviewing techniques not on all the aspects of recruitment and selection. Ryan and Tippins (2004) say that budget and time constraints play a role in the likelihood of adoption of best practices.

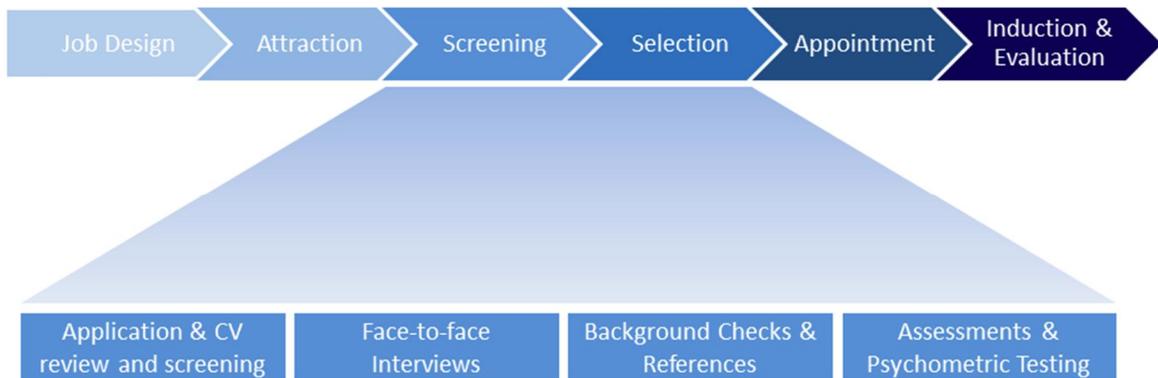
Jackson and Schuler (2003) found that a bad hiring decision can cost as much as five times the employee's salary through a number of factors including poor employee performance, lost productivity in peers, unmet customer expectations, and subsequent labour turnover costs. Davis (2005) identifies that despite huge amounts of time and effort allocated to recruitment, the process produces an unacceptable failure rate that reduces business competitiveness and corporate profits.

A point to keep in mind as a caution as pointed out by Ployhart and Schneider (2002) is that the effects of a valid selection process can be nullified by any lack of cooperation in groups and by bottlenecks, shirking and social loafing. Therefore it is important to relate selection back to values that assist in creating the desired cognitive and affective outcomes of working in teams as pointed out in Glew (2009). These outcomes are satisfaction, commitment and cohesiveness, and are driven by task meaningfulness and also the values of helpfulness and equality.

As selection is a step in the recruitment process, it is important to get a view of the recruitment processes as a whole to determine if any team selection criteria are

considered before selection. Dale (2003) outlines the following steps in the recruitment process; designing the job, attraction, screening, selection, appointment, induction and evaluation. This process along with the components of selection and screening are depicted below in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: RECRUITMENT PROCESS: SELECTION AND SCREENING



Source: Adapted from Dale (2003)

Screening has been addressed with selection as these two processes form part of evaluating candidates in order to select an individual for a position. As attraction and appointment occur directly before and immediately after screening and selection respectively, these two processes have been further discussed to assess their impact on selection. While job design could be altered to allow for different candidate profiles, this study operates under the assumption that job designs are need based and selection is a subsequent step that occurs after the need is defined and cannot influence the original requirements. Induction and evaluation are post selection processes and occur after the candidate is selected and hired; these processes are excluded as they have very little influence on selection.

### **2.2.1. ATTRACTION**

Carlson et al. (2002) reviews sourcing of candidates for a vacancy as attraction and states that the most common method used for evaluating attraction outcomes is the number of candidates generated. There are a number of different possible attraction options including internal promotions, hiring via leads from current staff, advertising externally through online sources and or print media and through the use of employment agencies and headhunters. In 1993, Terpstra and Rozelle performed a study in which they found a positive relationship between the greater use of selection methods and organisational performance. Carlson et al. (2002) highlight that the larger the candidate pool, the more selective the organisation can be, however a larger pool increases the costs of administering recruitment and selection systems. More candidates require more tracking, screening and correspondence and can even extend the time to fill a vacancy. Secondly in a resource constrained process not all candidates in a larger pool are properly screened, this limits the benefit of accessing a larger pool Carlson et al. (2002).

Guion (1998) takes a view that not all attraction methods are relevant and organisations should be selective in what they use, particularly in monitoring cost. Although Guion gets closer to identifying an approach to using specific selection methods for specific jobs, no clear link is made between particular selection methods and attracting applications for fit.

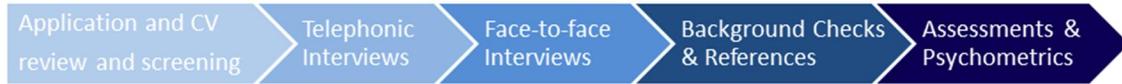
Moser (2005) study linked attraction and recruitment sources to recruitment outcomes. Moser found that recruitment sources can have various impacts on both pre and post hire outcomes for example unmet expectations, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job performance and employment survival. Employees who have more internal information about the company prior to appointment are better prepared for transition into the organisation. This shows it is important to focus on attraction processes in providing company information and background to the candidate, rather than adopting new methods of attraction.

### **2.2.2. SCREENING AND SELECTION**

In understanding how screening and selection should be taking selection for teams into account, there is a wealth of literature focused on understanding fit, from PE fit through PO fit and PG fit, down to PJ fit. Sekiguchi (2007) found that PJ fit is more important than PO fit when hiring employees for transactional roles, and PO fit is more important than PJ fit when hiring employees for relational roles.

Screening and selection include a number of information gathering steps designed to further assess suitability of the job candidates. Grobler and Wörnich (2006) present a comprehensive list of steps which include: review of candidates, initial screening, application blank, testing, interviews, background checks, departmental interviews and medical examinations. These steps correspond to the four elements of screening and selection as presented in Figure 1 above, and as shown in Figure 2 below.

FIGURE 2: ELEMENTS OF SCREENING AND SELECTION



Source: Adapted from Dale (2003)

The four sub-processes of screening and selection are labeled elements, as the order in which they are completed in practice varies depending on company specific process and preference.

#### **2.2.2.1. APPLICATION AND CV REVIEW AND SCREENING**

Although screening is not directly part of selection, screening is the process through which candidates who are unsuitable or who do not meet the main requirements of a job are eliminated from the process. As this has a direct bearing on which candidates remain available for selection processes to evaluate, it is useful to understand how screening processes assess suitability of individuals and whether these processes take into account team fit in deciding which candidates are suitable or unsuitable.

Grobler and Wörnich (2006) state that screening minimizes the time the Human Resources department spends on the selection process assessing obviously unqualified or undesirable candidates. Both Dale (2003) and Grobler and Wörnich (2006) suggest that screening is predominantly completed through evaluation of Curricula Vitae (CVs) or letters from candidates. In reviewing CVs, the HR officer

must determine if candidates have the minimum qualifications and meet the basic requirements required for the job in terms of experience and capabilities. During this process the HR officer must be aware of misleading information. In some cases screening goes a step further to contact candidates to gain an understanding of their interest in the job. Therefore provided the minimum requirements of the job take cognisance of team fit requirements correctly, unsuitable candidates should be rejected and suitable candidates should not be incorrectly screened out.

#### **2.2.2.2. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS**

Grobler and Wörnich (2006) state that a structured, objective interview process assists in controlling interview output subjectivity, as well as improving reliability and validity.

There are a number of different interview styles that can be used to assess candidates, these styles can be followed both one-to-one and panel interview formats. Dale (2003) explores the following interview styles:

- Structured interviews . The mnemonic WASP is used to summarise the steps which includes welcome, acquire information from the candidates, supply information to the candidate and part by describing next steps. Structured interview questions are set before the interview based on preparation for the interview and questions are used to elicit specific information from the candidate;

- Competency-based interviews . Interview questions focus directly on the elements of the specification;
- Situational interviews . Project candidates into the future using %What if+ questions and are used to determine expected candidate behaviour; and
- Informal interviews . These interviews follow a less structured approach and take the form of a discussion and are a format used to gain an understanding of a candidate's views on a certain topic.

Dale (2003) states that it is important to be aware that judgements made about a person are prone to distortion, bias and error. Grobler and Wörnich (2006) says that conducting objective interviews should take a two-phase approach including ensuring the interview setting is correct and the interview is prepared, and then to establish useful questioning during the interview. It is important to avoid certain problems including interviewer personal bias, unstructured interviews that end up getting different information from each interviewee leading to an inconsistent basis for comparison, inappropriate interview setting leading to worse performance by the interviewee and finally unrealistic appointment deadlines. After these basics are taken care of, a focus on fit can be addressed.

In a previous study from 2004, Sekiguchi reviewed how PO and PJ fit were taken into account in selection processes and found that while selection processes had been extensively focused on assessing PJ fit, PO fit was reviewed informally during face-to-face interviews. Subsequently, despite the lack of reliability of the

face-to-face interview, managers were reluctant to abandon the interview as it may be the best way of assessing PO fit, albeit it is an informal assessment based purely on the skill and interpretation of the interviewer. Despite the best recruitment and selection techniques having a validity coefficient of 0.6 (Dale, 2003), and the extensive theory on fit, this practice of informal assessment remains.

Kristof-Brown (2000) found that even in a short interview process recruiters consider a wide range of candidate characteristics and they are able to distinguish between PO and PJ fit. However Kristof-Brown (2000) also found that recruiters could benefit from guidance as to what makes a candidate a good cultural fit.

### **2.2.2.3. BACKGROUND CHECKS AND REFERENCES**

Background checks are focused on an assessment of the validity of the information put forward by the individual (Grobler and Wörnich, 2006) by checking that qualifications are real and getting information on the candidate's nationality, criminal record, credit history and employment history. Employment track records and past performance are more typically verified through reference checking.

While other background checks focus on the individual, reference checks present an opportunity to get input on how an individual performed in previous teams; however some employers only provide dates of employment and job title confirmation as they have become concerned with lawsuits (Grobler and Wörnich, 2006).

#### **2.2.2.4. ASSESSMENTS AND PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING**

Pre-employment testing is widely used to assess competence (Dale, 2003). However Grobler and Wörnich (2006) caution that the reliability and validity of testing must be considered to ensure testing is error free and can be used as an accurate predictor of job performance. In whatever sense competence based testing is used, it is centered on assessing individual competence and therefore it can also be used to assess certain skills that will assist with teamwork.

There are numerous psychometric tests available, some measure performance, aptitude and even knowledge (Grobler and Wörnich, 2006). These tests are used predominantly to assess an individual's capability. Further, there are psychological tests which measure personality and temperament among other things. These tests are often used to try to match culture. While certain behavioural elements can be understood from these tests, it is important that the interpretation of the tests is performed by trained professionals and that only information relevant to the job in question is communicated as the results of these tests are also highly dependent on the individual's circumstances on the day the test is taken (Murphy & Davidshofer, 2001). This means that the individual's behaviour can change subsequent to testing due to in-job or external factors. Psychological tests are most commonly used for roles that include a high level of responsibility (Grobler and Wörnich, 2006).

### **2.2.3. APPOINTMENT**

As per Dale (2003) appointment involves making an offer of employment, negotiating the offer with the successful individual, while ensuring the true feelings of this individual are taken into account. An additional step in this process is to give feedback to unsuccessful candidates and ensure that they are treated well. Unless the selected individual declines the offer and one of the other candidates is seen as suitable to employ, appointment will have no bearing on selection. If an offer is declined, and a second candidate is engaged for the purposes of making an offer, this is likely only to be done after selection considerations. Therefore, it can be concluded that provided appointment processes are correctly followed, they do not have a direct bearing on selection processes.

### **2.3. DISCUSSION**

This literature review highlights the complexity involved in both team dynamics and selection processes. Despite extensive research in the areas of teamwork and selection, reviewed literature shows that selection processes in use include very little successful, formal evaluation of candidate potential performance in teams despite the high costs of selection errors.

Substantial research has been done in the area of PO and PJ fit, yet as per Sekiguchi (2004), PO fit is still judged informally by managers during face-to-face interviews. Sekiguchi also states that managers tend to rely more frequently on

assessing PJ fit as a result of the lack of guidance on how to accurately assess PO fit.

The literature also shows that the best predictors of an individual's ability to perform in a team in the long term, other than past individual performance, can be identified by assessing the individual's values as they compare to the team values. This is linked to the standard definition of PG fit (Metzler, 2006). Furthermore with the increasing prevalence of teamwork, an individual is likely to plug into more than one team in a job due to the increasing interconnectedness within organisations (Ilgen, 2005).

As this is a practical problem addressed daily by organisations during selection processes, this study sought to understand how organisational selection processes have adapted in practice to evaluate PO fit in an attempt to uncover methods in use of improving selection processes, specifically when selecting for teams or highly relational environments.

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **3.1. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

The literature review has highlighted that despite an understanding of the importance of teamwork in the work environment; selection processes focus predominantly on assessment of individual skills and competencies and ignore evaluation of attributes important to performance in teams.

The purpose and empirical part of this research was to seek answers to the research questions outlined below, then to describe, decode and translate the findings into a practical and meaningful model for selection that includes assessment of criteria important to performance in teams. This chapter draws on the issues emerging from the literature review presented in chapter 2, together with the concepts and the purpose of the research detailed in the introduction.

### **3.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The five research questions are:

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

***Do selection experts feel there is a need to better assess individuals for expected contribution to team performance during selection?***

This research question sought to clarify the need to better assess candidates for team fit. The literature examined reinforced the importance of teamwork and the impact of selection error. Thus it is necessary to understand if in practice, selection experts within organisations have identified a need for improved selection processes used when forming teams.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

***Do selection experts understand what skills and values of individuals help them to contribute to team performance?***

This research question sought to examine if selection experts within organisations understand what skills and values in individuals help them to perform well in teams. If these experts do not understand what attributes help individuals to perform in teams and to assist team performance, assessment for these attributes may be difficult.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

***What evidence is there that organisational selection processes assess candidates for skills and values that assist team performance?***

This research question sought to understand what processes and methods have been implemented in practice to assist in selecting individuals for teams for two reasons:

1. Actual implemented measures indicate an attempt to address the area as it is recognised as important.
2. Methods implemented in practice may differ from existing available theory.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION 4**

***Are there barriers to implementing selection processes that focus on the individual's ability to perform within a team?***

This research question sought to examine why existing selection processes do not include assessment of skills and values that are likely to improve team performance despite available studies and knowledge on what makes teams perform.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION 5**

***Is there a difference in how the two different sample groups, being company selection decision makers and external recruitment professionals, view selection for team oriented work environments?***

This research question sought to examine if there is a difference in the way selection for team environments is approached and perceived between the two different sample groups.

## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research methodology utilised in this study. Four distinct stages were identified in the research process:

- Stage one: The literature review investigated existing teamwork and selection theory and to determine if any literature exists that caters to selection for teams. This was used for the preparation of an *a priori* model.
- Stage two: Additional information used to test and validate the model was obtained using in depth qualitative interviews.
- Stage three: The information obtained from the qualitative interviews was analysed and coded.
- Stage four: An *a posteriori* model was formulated based on the outcomes of this research.

### 4.2. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This research reports a qualitative study into selection processes as they are applied when selecting employees for team oriented work environments. Although the topics of teamwork and selection are well researched separately and exploratory research is usually conducted during the initial stage of the research process (Zikmund, 2003), no studies explore how selection processes can cater for

selection that assists in creating high performing teams. Therefore the method that was employed to conduct this study was an in-depth exploratory approach.

This study attempted to uncover new possible selection methods than can be used to select individuals for teams in ways that assist in creating high performing teams. The approach on which the research was founded involved both secondary data presented through an examination of the current theoretical based in chapter 2, and primary data gathered through expert interviews (Zikmund, 2003). The expert interviews focused on gathering qualitative data from two distinct sample groups, selection experts within company human resource functions and external recruitment consultants. The study can be divided into four distinct sequential stages.

#### **4.3. STAGE ONE: PREPARATION OF THE *A PRIORI* MODEL**

The first stage explored selection theory as it relates to selecting employees for team oriented environments. The theoretical base in chapter 2 was used as input for the preparation of an *a priori* model, which shows relationships between the variables (Golafshani, 2003). The information used for the preparation of the *a priori* model was sourced from the journals, academic papers, books and articles on teamwork and selection as referenced in this paper.

The process of preparing the *a priori* model was focused on splitting out and examining individual's skills and values as explored in the literature. Therefore skills and values, as they relate to the ability to team needs, form the basis for two

axes (X and Y). These axes intersect at right angles, at their midpoint, to obtain four equally sized quadrants. Qualitative content analysis of the literature was undertaken and single specific attributes were clustered into similar categories that reflected the various themes derived from the literature (Willis, 2007).

The intended advantage of the *a priori* model was to formulate a framework on which to evaluate and validate practices as discussed in the literature and to provide context to the organisation's approach with regards to selection processes for teams. The model was used as input into the in-depth interviews, to set out a common vocabulary and platform of understanding and to contribute to the quality and relevance of the output of the in-depth interview process conducted in stage two.

#### **4.4. STAGE TWO: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS AND DATA COLLECTION**

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, face-to-face interviews were held in order to seek answers to the five main research questions outlined in chapter 3. To probe for elaboration from respondents, primary data was obtained through semi structured in-depth, expert interviews guided by an interview schedule, Appendix A (Zikmund, 2003). The *a priori* model was used as a discussion point for clarification of concepts, seeking of meaning in the respondents' perspectives and to identify and probe the emergence of new strategies or best practices.

This research questions examined the perspective of the research participants

themselves as a means of exploring specific issues, obtaining additional and validating information for the questions under study (Babbie and Mouton, 2003). Alam (2005), states that interviews are suitable for acquiring valuable data through a detailed and honest discussion between the respondent and the researcher.

#### **4.4.1. SCOPE AND UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

As actions are performed by individuals and not by organisations, selection processes are completed by people. In order to understand the variety of possible selection methods in use, respondents from different organisations were used.

As this was a qualitative study which was interview based, the unit of analysis was the individuals' perceptions, and focused on processes related to selection of employees, excluding blue collar workers and entry level positions. At an entry level, selection processes are often volume based and therefore can differ greatly from general selection processes used for other positions within the company. In this light the targeted population is focused on choosing experts in the subject of selection process.

#### **4.4.2. POPULATION**

In order to consider a variety of approaches, two different groups of professionals were interviewed. The first group included professionals involved in selection for the company for which the candidate is being assessed and hereafter are referred to as company selection decision makers. The second group consisted of

recruitment consultants, working for recruitment consultancies, utilised by companies for attraction and screening, hereafter referred to as external recruitment professionals. The reasons for including the second group are threefold:

- Recruitment consultants are typically involved in selection processes full-time as opposed to professionals employed by organisations who typically perform a number of duties including selection. This allows them to focus all their time and effort improving the processes they use to select candidates for organisations;
- Recruitment agencies are usually required to provide guarantees which require them to repeat their recruitment and selection work if a candidate is not productive and is dismissed or leaves for any other reason within a defined period. This commercial structure creates a focus for agencies on ensuring candidates they select to put forward will fit in and be productive. The reputational and commercial risks of placing candidates who either do not fit in, stay or perform, add to this focus; and
- External recruitment consultants work for a number of different organisations and therefore get exposed to a variety of organisations' selection processes.

#### **4.4.3. SAMPLE SIZE AND METHOD**

Non-probability, judgment (purposive) sampling was used (Zikmund, 2003). The units observed were selected based on their availability, accessibility and, on the

basis of the researcher's judgement, in line with predetermined sampling criteria of which respondents would be most useful to the study. As two groups of professionals were interviewed, the target was to interview 10 professionals from each group, therefore 20 interviews were performed. The list of respondents is provided in Appendix B.

The population consisted of managers and professionals who:

- Are involved in determining the selection processes to be used for various roles;
- Have direct involvement in the selection process;
- Have been involved in selection for at least five years;
- Work for public and private corporate organisations; and
- Work in organisations that recruit on a regular basis. For the purposes of this study this will be organisations hiring at least five people a month on average.

The above population criteria were set to ensure that these individuals can be seen as experts due to having regular participation in selection. These criteria also ensured their familiarity with selection terminology and practice as well as the need to improve the sophistication of their processes.

#### **4.4.4. DATA GATHERING**

A sample list of potential respondents was drawn up. Potential respondents were contacted by phone to explain the research topic, purpose and the need for a one

hour interview with them. Once meetings were setup, the interviews were held at the respondents' places of work which required travel time to and from each interview.

Face-to-face, in-depth interviews were conducted with the two distinct sample groupings in order to seek answers to the four main research questions outlined in chapter 3. Research questions were posed and the *a priori* model was utilised as a discussion point for conducting the interview process in order to gather the primary data. The *a priori* model allows for ease of data gathering as well as clarification of concepts and seeking meaning in the respondents' perspectives (Marshall and Rossman, 2006).

Each interview took approximately one hour to complete and the semi-structured approach encouraged participants to converse freely about the research questions. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews and relevant visual aspects of the physical context, facial expressions and body language were recorded where necessary to document levels of expression or enthusiasm for points covered.

#### **4.4.5. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE DESIGN**

As in Appendix A, the research instrument was structured around open ended questions to explore ways of enhancing the selection process to cater for selection for teams. Two Likert Scale (Zikmund, 2003) questions were included to identify

the perceived impact of the current processes that are in use and the need for improving these processes.

In order to facilitate the exploration of each theme identified by the research questions in chapter 3, the interviews were steered by a discussion guide or interview schedule (Zikmund, 2003), as attached in Appendix A. The interview schedule facilitated a ~~guided~~ guided conversation and allowed the respondent to bring up related events (Broom, 2005). As per Zikmund (2003), it is important that questions were asked verbatim so as to allow little room for respondents to interpret questions differently. Within each question, probing questions were asked in an informal dialogue approach to encourage information sharing and dig deeper into specific themes where needed.

The interview schedule began with behaviour prompts for the researcher to ensure observation of protocol and adherence to the ethical process. This was followed by the reading of scripted definitions of teams, skills and values as they apply to the study and discussion of the *a priori* model, to ensure common understanding and a frame for the interviews. This definition process allowed for a single point of reference for respondents to obtain clarity on the topic under discussion prior to the interview commencing (Broom, 2005).

In order to quantify the perceived need for the study and to answer research question 1, as stated in chapter 3: *Do selection experts feel there is a need to*

*better assess individuals for expected contribution to team performance during selection?*, the respondents were asked question A of the interview schedule, as per Appendix A, which they answered on a Likert scale (Zikmund, 2003).

The interview schedule then continued with two open-ended questions which were questions B and C, aimed at answering research question 2 as in chapter 3: *Do selection experts understand what skills and values of individuals help them to contribute to team performance?*, these questions focused on splitting out attributes into skills and values and asking respondents which skills and values they felt help individuals to contribute to team performance. The last question on the interview schedule related to research question 2 was question I, which was aimed at understanding what skills and values the interviewees, felt were most important to an individual contributing to team performance.

The next open-ended question in the interview schedule, question D, looked for insight into existing processes and practices and how they cater for selection for teams in order to answer research question 3: *What evidence is there that organisational selection processes assess candidates for skills and values that assist team performance?* This was followed by a Likert scale question, question E, which was used to determine what the perception is with respect to whether or not it is possible to assess values within the selection process and an open ended question requesting an explanation as to why the applicable rating was selected. Question J on the interview schedule asked interviewees to quantify their ability to

accurately assess five values selected from teamwork literature. The aim of requesting this quantification was to attempt to understand the perceived ability of selection experts' ability to accurately assess values during the selection process.

Research Question 4: *Are there barriers to implementing selection processes that focus on the individual's ability to perform within a team?* In order to begin to answer this question it was asked directly with an open ended approach in question F on the interview schedule. Two additional questions, interview schedule questions G and H, were then asked in order to gain insight into the respondents suggested methods of dealing with selection for teams. When necessary, this was followed by standard probing questions that asked what they would feel would be ideal if time and cost were not limitations within the selection process, and if there is another selection approach they have tried in the past that worked well when selecting for a team. This approach looked to gain insight into additional creative or alternative selection methods, which may have been tested, and which could be used to extend the *a posteriori* model.

Research Question 5: *Is there a difference in how the two different sample groups, being company selection decision makers and external recruitment professionals, view selection for team oriented work environments?* This question is answered by looking at the data gathered for all the other research questions and assessing the difference in responses between the two sample groups, therefore no specific

question was added to the interview schedule in order to answer this research question.

The interviews were closed with a request for any general parting comments and then by thanking the respondents.

#### **4.4.6. PRE-TESTING**

To ensure the effectiveness of the interview schedule, the interview process was pre-tested by conducting two test interviews with experienced recruitment consultants in order to practice the timing and interview prompts (Zikmund, 2003) prior to being utilised in the field. The pre-tests helped to refine the interview guide and confirmed that the interview guide would assist in retrieving the data required to answer the research questions (Broom, 2005). Zikmund (2003) highlights that a pre-test is valuable as it allows the researcher to make slight changes to the questionnaire, such as, increasing space for questions where the answers are longer than expected.

#### **4.5. STAGE THREE: DATA ANALYSIS**

Most of the questions asked were qualitative and exploratory in nature; therefore the majority of the data is nominal. According to Zikmund (2003) data analysis is the application of reasoning to understand and interpret the data that has been collected. The analysis was focused on identifying themes in the respondents

discussions and therefore it consisted of content analysis with editing and coding, frequency analysis with rank-ordered tables and some descriptive statistics.

#### **4.5.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS**

An important principle of interpretative analysis is to provide a thick description of that data, and to place real-life events and phenomena into perspective (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 1999). Once the interviews notes were transcribed, content analysis of the data was carried out. Content analysis is a reductive systematic analysis of responses that leads to some thematic categorisation and an analysis of the incidence of themes (Holiday, 2002). The steps described by Holiday (2002) were used to perform the content analysis in order to infer meaning from the data and ultimately extend and validate the *a posteriori* model, as follows:

- Data was collected and transcribed, then read through and reflected upon to formulate a preliminary understanding of the meaning of the data, and what kinds of interpretations would be found and where they would be likely to occur;
- After creating a condensed list of responses, the researcher identified and labelled statements that included sub-themes, which related directly to the focus of the research;
- As recommended by Holiday (2002), the researcher requested another person to read the statements to see what sub-themes they could derive to

help to increase inter-rater reliability. Holiday states that any reasonable person should be able to fulfill this role. Therefore one independent person was used to categorise the statements to confirm the same conclusions could be reached;

- Statements were then coded into meaning units. Specific thoughts raised were clustered into similar categories to reflect the respondents thoughts; and
- The categories were then tested to see if divergent perspectives could be found. Then finally conclusions were drawn to construct composites.

The data was captured in order to identify the themes and ultimately extend and validate the *a posteriori* model.

#### **4.5.2. FREQUENCY ANALYSIS**

Frequency analysis was used in instances where a range of commonalities were identified. Frequency analysis helped to specify the number of times a particular variable occurred (Zikmund, 2003) and the frequency distribution of respondents answers to a question. Frequency analysis was also used to analyse the responses to the closed-ended questions in order to obtain definitive positions from the respondents in response to the questions posed. The themes and sub-themes from the responses were mapped onto an Excel spreadsheet and aggregated in order better to understand and interpret the frequency and nature of the responses.

#### **4.5.3. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

Questions A, E and J from the interview schedule were Likert scale questions. For these questions descriptive statistics have been used to summarise the data. These Likert scale questions were used to provide more quantitative information to help develop the *a posteriori* model which is presented in chapter 7, thus strengthening the study's overall outcome.

#### **4.5.4. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Criticisms of qualitative research often focus on the lack of reliability and validity. Holiday (2002) states that qualitative research needs to show its working to justify conclusions drawn from the results.

To ensure that reliability and validity was achieved during the research, the following mitigating tactics were used:

- Purposive sampling, based on pre-determined respondent criteria and knowledge of the subject area, were used to focus the study and obtain deeper insight;
- Detailed selection criteria assisted in ensuring repeatability;
- Using a single interviewer facilitated internal consistency (Zikmund, 2003); and
- The interview scripts were standardised.

#### **4.6. STAGE FOUR: FORMULATION OF THE *A POSTERIORI* MODEL**

In the final stage, an *a posteriori* model was formulated. Such a model integrates and extends the *a priori* model based on analysis of the research data (Golafshani, 2003). Therefore, the outcomes of the secondary data analysis from Stage 1 and the primary data were integrated. The *a posteriori* model is presented in chapter 7.

#### **4.7. POTENTIAL RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

This study had limitations that must be acknowledged. These were identified as follows:

- Interviewer and respondent bias may have impacted the results. The interviewer needed to be aware of this, to remain objective, to moderate this outcome;
- There was potential for bias during data analysis, based on the researcher's own perspective, assumptions and interpretations. Therefore there was a need for a sound theoretical base as the foundation of this research process;
- The outcome of the research was highly dependent on the quality of the information provided by the respondents during the in-depth interviews and hence the quality and thoroughness of the interview questions and process was important. This was mitigated to some degree by the preparation of the interview schedule and *a priori* model; and
- The outcome of non-probability, judgment sampling cannot be generalised to the entire population (Zikmund, 2003). Therefore, it would be

inappropriate to project the findings beyond this sample without further research.

#### **4.8. CONCLUSION**

The four stages of the research design and methodology were planned and completed in order to meet the requirements and objectives of this research report. The research drew insights from a number of recent academic studies and extended and enhanced these insights through data collection and analysis to allow for the formulation of the *a posteriori* model of a formal approach to selection for teams.

## 5. RESULTS

### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

The findings from each research stage as outlined in the research methodology in chapter 4 are reported below.

### 5.2. FORMULATION OF THE *A PRIORI* MODEL

The *a priori* model was developed from the literature reviewed in chapter 2, prior to conducting interviews, and was designed to create a framework in which to map the considerations for selection when selecting for teams or highly relational environments.

The development of the *a priori* model began with the formulation of a two-by-two model that characterises the considerations of selection processes. The *a priori* model is a two-by-two matrix with four quadrants representing the candidates' attributes that are under consideration during selection. Two axes were identified from the literature. The X-axis depicts skills alignment and the Y-axis represents values alignment. The axes were placed at right angles to each other intersecting at mid-point, to create four, equally sized and opposing quadrants. The quadrants displayed by the model represent the attractiveness of a candidate for selection. This created a framework for assessment of candidates, which extended beyond merely evaluating PJ fit or competence. The quadrants allow for approximate plotting of organisational needs and each candidate's relative position.

The quadrants represent those strategies which:

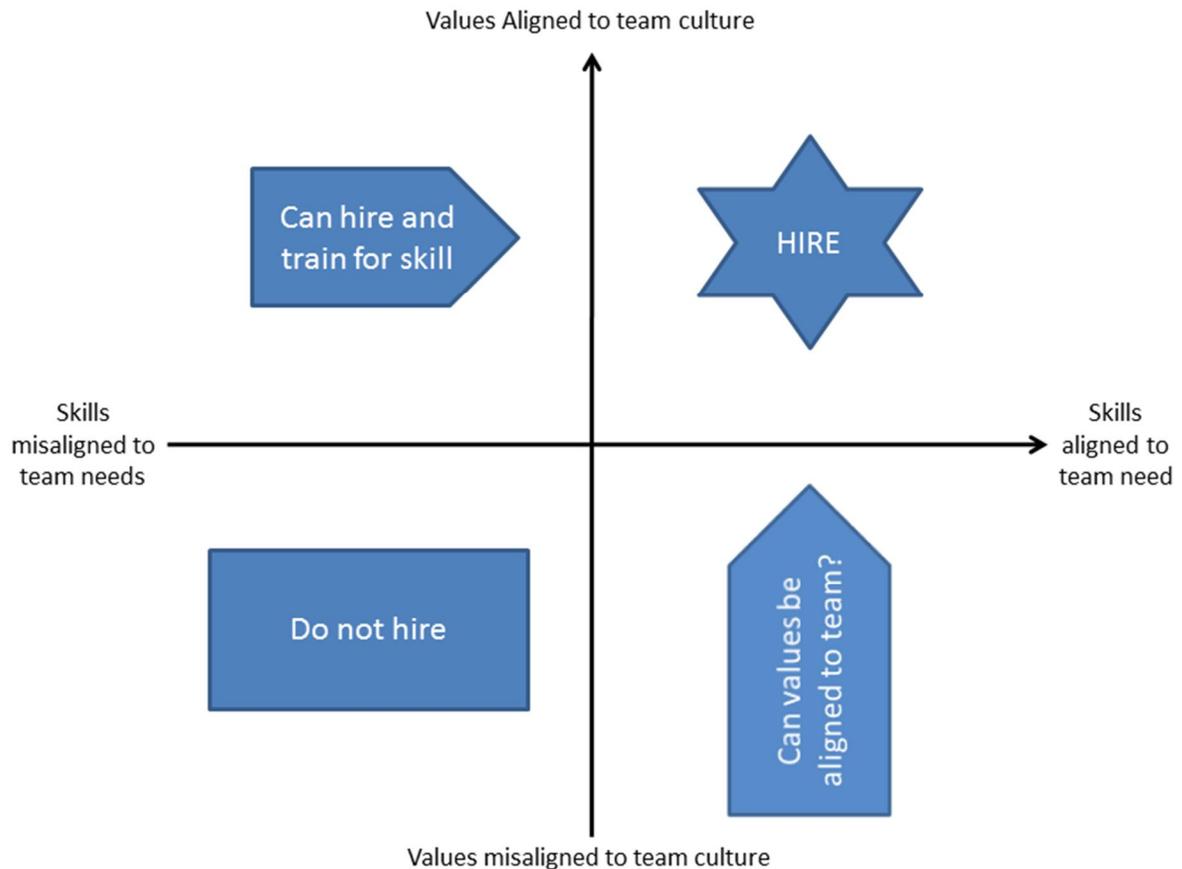
- Represent both a skills and a cultural alignment (top right quadrant).
- Represent a cultural fit but a misalignment in skill (top left quadrant).
- Represent a skills alignment but not a cultural alignment (bottom right quadrant).
- Represent both a skills and cultural misalignment (bottom left quadrant).

### **5.3. PURPOSE AND APPLICATION OF THE *A PRIORI* MODEL**

The *a priori* model formulates a framework which demonstrates the thinking in the literature. The model was used as input into the in-depth interviews in order to obtain a common platform of understanding and to contribute to the quality and relevance of the output of the in-depth interview process conducted in stage two.

A depiction of the *a priori* model used for this study is shown below. The model is focused on alignment of skills and values, rather than level of skills and values. The model recognises that an individual, despite having the correct motivations, may not be correctly skilled for the required job role. A candidate may be very highly skilled, but these skills may be inappropriate to the job function or may make the candidate too expensive to hire. It is important to recognise that in selection there is a focus on determining candidate suitability by trying to match the suitability of the candidate's skills, rather than assessing level of skill. The model derived from the available literature suggests that candidate selection should place as much emphasis on assessing alignment of values as evaluating candidate skill.

FIGURE 3: A *PRIORI* MODEL FOR TEAM SELECTION



Based on this model of evaluating skills and values alignment, this research will focus on understanding how the assessment of skills and values is performed in practice, as well as if it is possible to determine skills and values alignment within the constraints of the selection process (Ryan and Tippins, 2004).

#### 5.4. FINDINGS FROM STAGE TWO: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In order to answer the research questions, data was collected via 20 expert interviews. Utilising the interview guide as shown in Appendix A, this process required approximately one hour per respondent. This was followed by ninety

minutes of content analysis per interview. The seven interview questions contained within the interview guide link directly back to one of the five research questions. Mapping of the interview questions to the research questions is as follows, and is detailed further in Appendix C:

- **Research Question 1:** Mapped to Interview Question A.

This research question sought to clarify the need to better assess candidates for team fit;

- **Research Question 2:** Mapped to Interview Questions B, C and I.

This research question sought to examine if selection experts within organisations understand what skills and values in individuals help them to perform well in teams;

- **Research Question 3:** Mapped to Interview Questions D, G and J.

This research question sought to understand what processes and methods have been implemented in practice to assist in selecting individuals for teams;

- **Research Question 4:** Mapped to Interview Questions E, F and H.

This research question sought to examine why existing selection processes do not include assessment of skills and values that are likely to improve team performance; and

- **Research Question 5:** Mapped to all Interview Questions A . J.

This research question sought to determine if there is a difference in the way the two sample groups perceive the approach to selection for teams.

Once the data was collected it was analysed using both qualitative and quantitative measures. Content analysis identified common themes, and frequency analysis was used to create rank-ordered tables and analyse the responses received to closed-ended questions.

The content analysis was performed using a template created in a spreadsheet that allowed for each newly identified concept pertaining to selection to be captured in a table related to the relevant research question.

As the content analysis process advanced a large spread of frequencies was identified. For each identified concept the number of mentions by each respondent was tallied using frequency analysis, and then rank-ordered from most discussed to least discussed. As a result of the vast quantity of frequencies, a process of collapsing and aggregating the data into common themes was undertaken with any duplicated responses per respondent being removed. The number of responses given in the final aggregated, rank-ordered table resulted in more focused and concise insights. Frequency analysis was used to rank-order the responses and to analyse the responses to the closed-ended questions in order to obtain definitive positions from the respondents in response to the questions posed.

In the following section the aggregated research findings are presented. The results are listed under each of the four research questions and directly correlate back to the responses from each of the interview questions.

#### 5.4.1. RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1

***Do selection experts feel there is a need to better assess individuals for expected contribution to team performance during selection?***

This research question sought to clarify the need to better assess candidates for team fit. The literature examined reinforced the importance of teamwork and the impact of selection error. Therefore this question looked to understand if in practice, selection experts have identified a need for improved selection processes related to selecting for teams. The question was asked in two parts, as follows:

Question A1 from the interview schedule was a Likert scale question and assessed the degree to which respondents agreed with the following statement: *There is not enough focus on team fit within current selection processes*. The results are shown in the table below:

TABLE 1: NEED FOR ADDED FOCUS ON TEAM FIT DURING SELECTION

Category	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
Strongly Agree	3	1	2
Agree	9	3	6
Neutral	3	1	2
Disagree	2	2	0
Strongly Disagree	3	3	0

Twelve respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and three were neutral, but the five respondents who disagreed were all company respondents.

Question A2 from the interview schedule asked respondents why they provided the answer that they did to part one of this question. This was an open ended question which focused on understanding why respondents perceived that the focus on team fit assessment during selection was sufficient or not. This question allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. From the answers given, sub-themes were identified and the frequency that sub-themes were raised was tallied using frequency analysis. These frequencies are presented in the rank order table below:

TABLE 2: INSUFFICIENT FOCUS ON TEAM FIT DURING SELECTION: AGREE  
This table shows results for respondents who agreed or strongly agreed.

Rank	Construct	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Assessment is only done informally	9	3	6
2	Assessment tools too costly	4	2	2
3	Dependent on company, and company selection process	2	0	2
3	Scenario questions are used	2	0	2
3	Difficult to get right, so the focus is only on basic looking for conflicts	2	1	1
6	There is enough focus, but the technique could be improved	1	1	0
6	Achieved through multiple interviews with different team members	1	1	0
6	Skill of selection agents is too low	1	0	1

Nine of twelve respondents that agreed or strongly agreed that the level of focus on team fit during selection is insufficient, stated that assessments for team fit were completed informally and only four of the twelve respondents stated that assessment tools were too costly to use consistently.

TABLE 3: INSUFFICIENT FOCUS ON TEAM FIT DURING SELECTION: DISAGREEE

This table show results for respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Rank	Construct	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Assessment is only done informally	4	4	0
2	There is enough focus, but the technique could be improved	3	3	0
3	Assessment tools are too costly to use consistently	2	2	0
3	Focus is predominantly on assessing job related competence	2	2	0
5	Achieved through multiple interviews with different team members	1	1	0

Of five respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the level of focus on team fit during selection is insufficient, four stated that assessment for team fit is performed through informal evaluation.

#### 5.4.2. RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2

***Do selection experts understand what skills and values of individuals help them to contribute to team performance?***

This research question sought to examine if selection experts within organisations understand what skills and values help individuals to perform well in teams. If selection experts do not understand this, assessment for these attributes may be difficult. The research question was asked in three parts in the interview schedule.

Question B from the interview schedule was open ended and focused on identifying perceived necessary skills for individuals to contribute to team performance, it allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers to ensure interpretation of the words they used was correct: *Which skills in individuals do you feel helps them to contribute to team performance?* From the answers given, sub-themes were identified and the frequency that the sub-themes were raised was tallied using frequency analysis. These are presented in the rank order table below:

TABLE 4: SKILLS REQUIRED FOR CONTRIBUTION TO TEAM PERFORMANCE

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Articulation, clear and direct, concise communication	16	7	9
2	Diplomacy, political skill, conflict resolution, leadership skill	15	6	9
3	Active listening, interpretation, seeing unemotional facts, understanding	14	6	8
4	Job related skill or competence	13	6	7
5	Ability to engage with people at different levels	11	7	4
5	Self-awareness, introspection, self-motivation, ability to take criticism	11	5	6
7	Relationship building, interpersonal skill, empathy, assertiveness	10	7	3
8	Contextual ability, understand how teams perform, sequential information processing, analytical skill	7	3	4
9	Task completion, attention to detail, analytical skill - inductive reasoning	6	2	4
10	Time management, planning and organising	4	2	2
11	Resilience, handle pressure	3	2	1
12	Appropriate presentation to fit group	2	1	1

Although some common sub-themes emerge, a wide variety of specific skills are believed to be important for individuals to assist teams to perform. Notably sixteen respondents felt articulation skills are important and fourteen respondents felt listening skills are important which suggests that communication skills on a whole are seen as important for team members.

Question C from the interview schedule was an open ended question which focused on perceived necessary values, and allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers in order to ensure the interpretation of the words used by respondents was understood correctly. *Which values in individuals do you feel helps them to contribute to team performance?* From the answers given, sub-themes were identified and the frequency that these sub-themes were raised was tallied using frequency analysis. These frequencies are presented in the rank order table below:

TABLE 5: VALUES REQUIRED FOR CONTRIBUTION TO TEAM PERFORMANCE

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Team role orientation, collaboration, collectivism	15	7	8
1	Respect	15	10	5
3	Conscientiousness, loyalty, reliability, ethics, integrity,	12	5	7
3	Diversity, tolerance, inclusivity, acceptance, equality	12	7	5
5	Motivation, team commitment, purpose	9	4	5
6	Hard work, contribution, thoroughness, commitment, conviction, participation	8	3	5

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
7	Honesty	7	4	3
9	Achievement, recognition	5	3	2
9	Learning and knowledge, self-improvement, humility, incremental improvement, understanding, wisdom	5	4	1
9	Compassion, empathy	5	4	1
12	Sharing	3	1	2
12	Helpfulness, service orientation	3	1	2
12	Adaptability, flexibility and valuing change	3	2	1
15	Energy, positivity	2	0	2
16	Patience	1	1	0
16	Trust	1	1	0
16	Courage	1	1	0

Two values were mentioned by fifteen respondents each, these values were team role orientation and respect. Respect was brought up as a value by all ten company selection decision makers although when questioned about how to define respect, several definitions were raised.

Question I from the interview schedule was aimed at understanding what skills and values were seen as most important when selecting for teams based on the skills and values answers given in question B and C. *Please select the top three skills and values as discussed in questions B and C you feel help individuals to contribute to team performance.* From the answers given, sub-themes were identified and the frequency that these sub-themes were raised was tallied using

frequency analysis. These frequencies are presented in the rank order tables below:

TABLE 6: SKILLS MOST IMPORTANT FOR TEAM PERFORMANCE

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Communication - Articulation	11	4	7
2	Relationship building	8	6	2
3	Active listening	7	4	3
3	Job related competence	7	4	3
5	Ability to engage at all levels	3	2	1
5	Conflict management	3	1	2
5	Ability to contextualise	3	1	2
5	Political Skill / Diplomacy	3	1	2
5	Time Management and Planning	3	0	3
10	Attention to detail / Task completion	2	2	0
10	Personal mastery / Self-awareness / Emotional Maturity	2	2	0
10	Adaptability	2	0	2
13	Empathy	1	1	0
13	Servant leadership	1	1	0
13	Ability to take criticism	1	1	0
13	Self-motivation	1	0	1
13	Analytical skill	1	0	1
13	Learning potential	1	0	1

A wide variety of answers were provided for both skills and values. Communication skills remain a key theme with the first and third ranked skills relating to communication. As below, the spread of values seen as important to performance in teams is large, and there were no values selected as most important by more than eight respondents. Despite team role orientation being raised by fifteen respondents in question C, only five respondents perceive this to be one of the most important values for team members.

TABLE 7: VALUES MOST IMPORTANT FOR TEAM PERFORMANCE

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Respect	8	7	1
2	Purpose	6	2	4
2	Integrity	6	3	3
2	Team Orientation	6	2	4
5	Accountability	5	4	1
6	Hard work / Work ethic	4	2	2
7	Loyalty	3	1	2
7	Commitment	3	1	2
7	Diversity	3	0	3
7	Inclusivity	2	0	2
11	Excellence	2	1	1
11	Autonomy	2	1	1
11	Equality	2	0	2
11	Self-awareness	2	1	1
15	Continuous improvement	1	1	0
15	Humility	1	1	0
15	Compassion	1	1	0
15	Achievement	1	0	1
15	Courage	1	1	0

### 5.4.3. RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3

***What evidence is there that organisational selection processes assess candidates for skills and values that assist team performance?***

This research question sought to understand what processes and methods have been implemented in practice to assist in selecting individuals for teams for two reasons:

1. Actual implemented measures indicate an attempt to address the area as it is recognised as important.

2. Methods implemented in practice may differ from existing available theory.

Question D from the interview schedule was open ended and focused on gathering information on current process; it allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. *How does your selection process evaluate candidates for skills and values that contribute to team performance?* The following themes emerged from the responses:

TABLE 8: CURRENT PROCESSES USED FOR SELECTION FOR TEAMS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Prior assessment of team and requirements	13	6	7
2	Informally	12	6	6
3	Prior understanding of job skill needs	9	1	8
3	Pre-designed interview questions	9	4	5
5	Job related competencies	7	5	2
5	Prior understanding of company values	7	1	6
7	Situational/Scenario based questions	6	0	6
8	Multiple inputs	5	5	0
8	Thorough understanding of candidate's motivation	5	1	4
8	Observation of behaviour during interviews	5	1	4
8	Behaviour assessments	5	5	0
12	Culture Conflicts	4	3	1
13	Organisational Culture Alignment	3	3	0
14	Description of the best previous performer	2	0	2
15	Team input on what will work best	1	0	1
15	Selection decision maker engagement	1	0	1
15	Candidate culture assessment in social setting	1	0	1

Many respondents provided answers that involved preparatory work before selection. Thirteen of the respondents brought up gaining a good understanding of team needs prior to selection, nine spoke about obtaining an accurate understanding of job skill requirements prior to selection, and nine discussed that developing pre-designed interview questions that tested for specific competencies and values. Twelve respondents acknowledged that despite following a selection process, assessing candidates for team fit or matching candidates to teams was done on an informal basis.

Question G from the interview schedule was an open ended question which focused on understanding if team fit criteria are seen as important selection decision factors when companies are making selection decisions, therefore unlike all the other questions from the interview schedule, the answers requested were not limited to the context of selection for teams. *What are the most important factors you consider in making a selection decision?* This question allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. The following themes emerged from the responses that were given:

TABLE 9: SELECTION DECISION FACTORS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Job related competencies and capability	12	7	5
2	Culture fit	10	7	3
3	Aligned motivators	9	2	7
4	Growth potential	4	2	2
4	Initiative	4	2	2
4	Look for inconsistency	4	2	2
7	Longevity, loyalty	3	2	1
7	Energy	3	0	3
7	Communication skills	3	1	2
10	Relevant experience	2	2	0
10	Honesty / Trustworthiness / Ethical	2	1	1
12	Ambition	1	1	0
12	Can come up with ideas	1	1	0
12	Willing to help	1	1	0
12	Ability to handle conflict	1	0	1
12	Ownership	1	1	0

Ten respondents cited culture fit as an important selection decision factor and nine respondents commented that it is important that potential employees have motivations aligned with team function and company strategy.

#### 5.4.4. RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 4

***Are there barriers to implementing selection processes that focus on the individual's ability to perform within a team?***

This research question sought to examine why existing selection processes do not include a more formal assessment of skills and values that contribute to team

performance, despite studies on what makes teams perform. Question E from the interview schedule had two parts. The first part, question E1, included a Likert scale question and assessed the degree to which respondents agreed with the following statement: *It is possible to accurately assess an individual's values during the selection process.* The results are shown in the table below:

TABLE 10: ABILITY TO ACCURATELY ASSESS VALUES DURING SELECTION

Category	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
Strongly Agree	6	3	3
Agree	7	3	4
Neutral	2	1	1
Disagree	4	2	2
Strongly Disagree	1	1	0

Thirteen respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and five respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Question E2 from the interview schedule asked respondents to elaborate on their answer to question E1. This was an open ended question focused on understanding why respondents perceived that values could or could not be accurately assessed during selection. This question allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. The following themes emerged from the responses that were given:

TABLE 11: LIMITATIONS TO ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF VALUES: AGREE  
This table show results for respondents who agreed or strongly agreed.

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Expertise of selection agent	8	3	5
2	Candidates mask during selection	4	1	3
3	Limited time	3	1	2
4	Pre-designed interviews	2	1	1
4	Extent of selection process	2	1	1
6	Situational questions	1	1	0
6	References	1	1	0

Eight out of thirteen respondents, who agreed that values could be accurately assessed during selection, indicated that if selection agents have sufficient expertise values can be accurately assessed. This included three out of six company selection decision makers and five out of seven external recruitment professionals.

TABLE 12: LIMITATIONS TO ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF VALUES: DISAGREE

This table show results for respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Limited time	3	2	1
2	Expertise of selection agent	2	1	1
2	Candidates mask during selection	2	1	1
4	Behaviour influenced by circumstance	1	1	0

Of the five respondents that disagreed that values could be accurately assessed during selection, two mentioned that level of expertise of the selection agent is a factor.

Question F from the interview schedule was an open ended question which focused on understanding what the perceived barriers to a more in depth assessment of team fit during selection are. *What barriers are there to performing a more in depth assessment for team fit during selection?* This question allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. The following themes emerged from the responses given:

TABLE 13: BARRIERS TO IN-DEPTH VALUES ASSESSMENT DURING SELECTION

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Time – Need to make decisions quickly	13	6	7
2	Expertise of selection decision makers	10	3	7
3	Candidates mask during selection - deliberately or not deliberately	7	3	4
4	Time – Lack of time with candidate	6	3	3
4	Time – Understanding requirements and team	6	2	4
6	SA legislation	2	1	1
6	More people need to be involved in selection decision	2	2	0
6	Language, religious and cultural differences	2	0	2
6	How seriously the organisation takes selection / Line manager buy-in	2	1	1
10	Limited exposure to candidates in informal settings	1	1	0
10	Lack of knowledge of candidates previous team	1	0	1
10	Skills shortages make people more flexible on fit	1	0	1
10	Reticence to expose potentials to team	1	1	0
10	Teams change composition quickly	1	1	0

As in the Question E2, time pressures and expertise of selection decision makers were the most regularly cited reasons for poor evaluation of candidates for team fit.

Question H from the interview schedule was an open ended question which requested respondents to generate ideas as to what different approaches to assessing candidates for team fit could be used. To broaden the scope of ideas generated, respondents were asked to assume that time and resources are not a constraint to the process. *If time and resources were not a limitation, in your opinion what approach would help to achieve a better assessment of a candidate's fit into a particular team.* This question allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. The following themes emerged from the responses that were given:

TABLE 14: APPROACH SUGGESTED BY RESPONDENTS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	More face-to-face engagement with candidate/multiple interviews	12	5	7
2	Team interviews	9	5	4
3	More time into interview preparation	7	4	3
4	Informal interviews - social setting	6	1	5
5	Use more assessment tools	5	2	3
5	In job assessment/Working interviews	5	1	4
7	Observed interviews	3	1	2
8	Expertise in selection decision makers	2	2	0
8	More psychometric input	2	2	0
8	Job simulation assessments	2	1	1
8	Self-selection and make sure the candidate has the full picture	2	0	2
8	Role plays, workshops & case studies	2	2	0
13	Communication style evaluation - preferred media, and grammar used	1	0	1

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
13	Client interviews	1	1	0
13	Post interview written motivations	1	0	1

Twelve respondents felt that more time spent assessing candidates and involving more people from the business in conducting interviews to generate multiple inputs, would improve assessment of candidate values.

Question J from the interview schedule was aimed at assessing the degree to which respondents felt that a candidate's values could be accurately assessed during the selection process. Respondents were asked to rank their ability to assess the level of an candidate's adoption of a set list of five values drawn from the literature, on an ordinal scale. *To what degree can the recruitment expert understand an individual's level of the following values during the selection process? Please rate the following values on a scale of 1 – 10, 10 being a perfect assessment.* The averages of the ratings are presented below:

TABLE 15: ABILITY TO ASSESS VALUES DURING SELECTION

Construct	AVE.	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
Achievement	7.3	6.7	7.9
Autonomy	6.6	6.2	6.9
Helpfulness	6.3	5.9	6.6
Honesty	5.7	5.2	6.2
Equality	5.5	5.3	5.7
AVERAGE	6.3	5.9	6.7

External recruitment professionals rated their ability to accurately assess values during selection on average nearly a point higher than company selection decision makers. Achievement received the highest average rating of 7.3, while honesty and equality are seen as the most difficult to assess at 5.5 and 5.7 respectively.

#### **5.4.5. RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 5**

***Is there a difference in how the two different sample groups, being company selection decision makers and external recruitment professions, view selection for team oriented work environments?***

This research question sought to examine the difference in responses between the two sample groups, these being company selection decision makers and external recruitment professionals. The results from the interview schedule as presented in the other four research questions above do reveal both similarity and differences in responses which will be analysed in chapter 6.

#### **5.5. CONCLUSION**

The results from the four research questions support the constructs found in the existing literature and contribute to new knowledge. In chapter 6, the results from the research process and the *a posteriori* model are discussed in more detail. The *a posteriori* model provides a framework which can be used as part of selection to ensure an candidate's fit into a particular team is addressed during the process.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

The research questions and in-depth interview questions utilised in this study were informed by the body of existing literature around teamwork and selection for teams. In this chapter the results are discussed in terms of the research questions and the literature reviewed. The data coding and analysis procedure allowed for the aggregation and refinement of the data (Zikmund, 2003). For the first time this study was able to understand the approaches to and perceived problems with selection for teams, and thereby construct a practical model on how to evaluate an individual for team fit during selection.

### 6.2. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1

***Do selection experts feel there is a need to better assess individuals for expected contribution to team performance during selection?***

This research question sought to determine the perceived need for the study and attempted to understand if selection experts feel that individuals should be better assessed for team fit during selection.

Initially a direct, closed ended question was asked during the interviews and the data in table 1 shows that twelve out of twenty respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there was not enough focus on team fit during selection. When

examining the split in responses between the ten external recruitment professionals and ten company selection decision makers, the data shows that while eight out of ten recruitment respondents agreed or strongly agreed, only four out of ten company respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Five out of ten company respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed; indicating that they feel there is adequate emphasis. The trend is surprising in the light of Wilk and Capelli (2003) stating that selection processes focus predominantly on assessing individual criteria. It is possible that the company respondents have found practical approaches to selection for teams, or they may be reluctant to reveal weaknesses in their process. Therefore it is important to examine the reasons for their answers.

As in tables 2 and 3, eight out of ten company selection decision makers explained that the focus on assessing team fit during selection was there, however this evaluation was informal. The remaining two respondents indicated that while they felt there was sufficient focus on assessing team fit, the techniques in use could be improved. Of the five company respondents that either disagreed or strongly disagreed, four indicated that assessment of team fit was informal. Therefore although companies focus on evaluating a candidate's fit to a team, they have not found nor applied a formal method and are in line with Sekiguchi's (2004) study which states that team fit is assessed informally during face-to-face interviews.

It is interesting that in responding to this question, no respondents mentioned that time constraints prevented a more thorough assessment, and that only two out of

twenty respondents indicated that they felt psychometric assessments acted as a good tool in this process, but that they were too costly to use on a regular basis.

### **6.2.1. CONCLUSIVE FINDING FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

This research question sought to understand if selection experts had identified a need to better assess candidates for team fit during selection. The responses provided show that companies may feel they have sufficient focus on assessment for team fit during selection, however there are no formal processes assessment is completed informally, leaving room for selection error. Grobler and Wörnich (2006), state that an objective structured interview process helps to increase reliability and validity and improve outputs. The respondents recognised that there is a need to improve the selection techniques used and a need for further research in this area.

### **6.3. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

***Do selection experts understand what skills and values help individuals to contribute to team performance?***

This research question sought to examine if selection experts within organisations understand what skills and values in individuals help them to perform well in teams. As Kristof-Brown<sup>§</sup> (2000) study found recruiters could benefit from guidance as to what makes a candidate a good cultural fit. Therefore if selection experts do not understand what attributes individuals need to contribute to team performance, they will not be assessing candidates correctly. This would make it difficult to setup

high performing teams through selection of well suited team members. For the purposes of the discussion, skills and values are addressed separately below.

### 6.3.1. SKILLS IMPORTANT FOR PERFORMANCE IN TEAMS

Looking at the skills shown as shown in Table 4, central themes emerge. This is valuable as selection processes can be adapted to include evaluation of a candidate's skill level in these areas and the results can help to predict performance in the team. As concluded by Stewart (2006), cognitive ability and expertise correspond with team performance. The themes identified are as follows:

TABLE 16: THEMES BEHIND SKILLS SUB-THEMES

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL
<b>Communication Skills</b>		
1	Articulation, clear and direct communication, concise communication	16
3	Active listening, interpretation, understanding, seeing unemotional facts	14
5	Ability to engage with people at different levels	11
7	Relationship building, interpersonal skill, empathy, assertiveness	10
<b>Job Related Technical Skills</b>		
4	Job related skill or competence	13
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>		
2	Diplomacy, political skill, conflict resolution, leadership skill	15
5	Self-awareness, introspection, self-motivation, ability to take criticism	11
11	Resilience, handle pressure	3
12	Appropriate presentation to fit group	2
<b>Cognitive Skills</b>		
8	Ability to contextualise, sequential information processing, understand how teams perform, analytical skill - deductive reasoning	7
9	Task completion, attention to detail, analytical skill - inductive reasoning	6
10	Time management, planning and organising	4

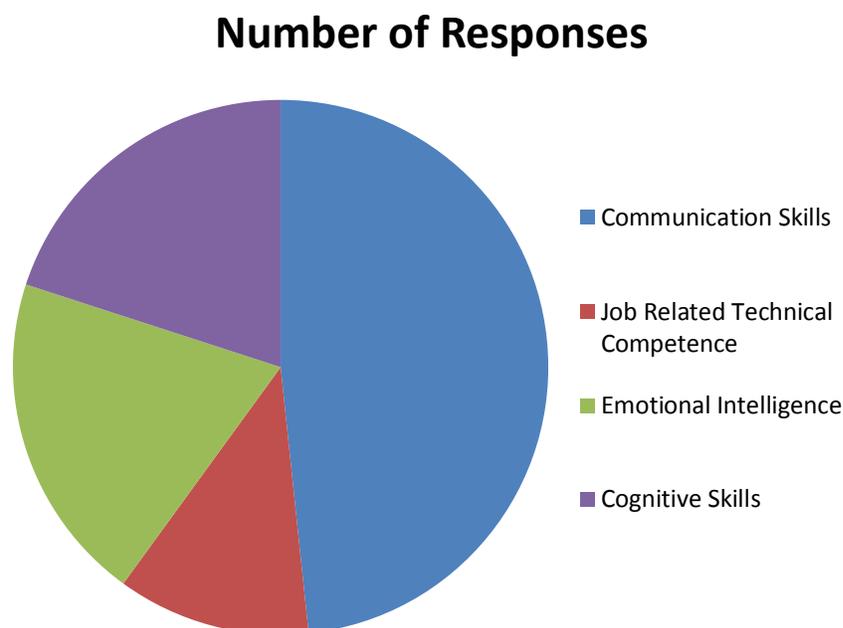
The four central themes behind the sub-themes identified from the constructs are communication skills, job specific technical skills, emotional intelligence and cognitive skills. The table below shows the identification of the same four themes drawn from table 6, when the respondents were asked to select three skills they felt were most important.

TABLE 17: THEMES BEHIND MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS SUB-THEMES

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL
<b>Communication Skills</b>		
1	Articulation	11
2	Relationship building	8
3	Active listening	7
5	Ability to engage at all levels	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>29</b>
<b>Job Related Technical Skills</b>		
3	Job related competence	7
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>		
5	Conflict management	3
5	Political Skill / Diplomacy	3
10	Personal Mastery / Self-awareness / Emotional Maturity	2
13	Servant leadership	1
13	Empathy	1
13	Ability to take criticism	1
13	Self-motivation	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>Cognitive Skills</b>		
5	Ability to contextualise	3
5	Time Management and Planning	3
10	Attention to detail / Task completion	2
10	Adaptability	2
13	Analytical skill	1
13	Learning potential	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>

For the results shown in Table 16 and Table 17, where respondents were asked to select the three most important skills, broadly communication emerges as the most important skillset for team performance, though interestingly communication is not directly referenced in the literature, intra-team coordination is noted as being correlated with team performance (Stewart, 2006), and as in Ahearn et al. (2004) is influenced by leadership and leader political skill. Emotional intelligence skills and cognitive skills were each selected twelve times. Interestingly job related technical competence was only selected seven of the respondents.

FIGURE 4: MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS SELECTED BY THEME



Unsurprisingly, communication skills are seen as vital for individuals who work in teams or in highly relational jobs. This is supported in the study Ahearn et al. (2004) where it is shown that intra-team coordination as well as the communication skills of the team members has a strong correlation to team performance.

Cognitive skills and job related technical competence or expertise were two of the themes that emerged. These themes relate to Stewart's (2006) study which shows that cognitive ability and expertise correspond with team performance. It is interesting to note that the literature puts little emphasis on the skills grouped in this study as emotional intelligence, yet as per Goleman (1998) effective leaders are all alike in that they have a high degree of emotional intelligence.

### **6.3.2. VALUES IMPORTANT FOR PERFORMANCE IN TEAMS**

Unlike skills which have natural groupings, values are difficult to group as respondents have different meanings behind their responses, for example: According to the Oxford English Dictionary, respect is to hold someone in high esteem. When respondents were questioned, the two most common constructs raised in relation to respect, were respect for diversity and diverse opinion. These constructs relate to tolerance of diversity and manners, rather than esteem.

The literature suggests six core values which are found to be strong predictors of performance in teams or overall team performance: Glew (2009) found equality, helpfulness and honesty to be useful predictors, Cordery, et al. (2010) show that autonomy is needed to enable performance, Dyer (1984) stated that teams need to be motivated to achieve a common objective and Cohen and Bailey's (1997) model found team task meaningfulness to be a strong predictor. It is interesting that none of the values from the literature were amongst the top values raised by respondents as in table 5 and as summarised in the table below:

TABLE 18: TOP VALUES RAISED BY RESPONDENTS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL
1	Team role orientation, collaboration, collectivism	15
1	Respect	15
3	Conscientiousness, loyalty, reliability, ethics, integrity,	12
3	Diversity, tolerance, inclusivity, acceptance, equality	12
5	Motivation, team commitment, purpose	9
6	Hard work, contribution, thoroughness, commitment, conviction, participation	8
7	Accountability, autonomy	7
7	Honesty	7
9	Achievement, recognition	5

When examining the values seen as most important from table 7, the mismatch is even larger, with only four of the six values from the literature raised by respondents as highlighted in the table below:

TABLE 19: MOST IMPORTANT VALUES RAISED BY RESPONDENTS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL
1	Respect	8
2	Team Orientation	6
2	<b>Purpose</b>	6
2	Integrity	6
5	Accountability	5
6	Hard work / Work ethic	4
7	Loyalty	3
7	Commitment	3
7	Diversity	3
7	Inclusivity	3
11	Excellence	2
11	<b>Autonomy</b>	2
11	<b>Equality</b>	2
11	Self-awareness	2
15	Continuous improvement	1
15	Humility	1
15	Compassion	1
15	<b>Achievement</b>	1
15	Courage	1

The mismatch and the wide array of values identified reveals that despite the expertise level of the respondents, in practice there is a large amount of uncertainty as to which values are important when assessing individuals for team oriented work environments. This is a possible cause of some problems with the outcomes of selection processes, as the assessment of fit or values during selection, occurs in face-to-face interviews (Sekiguchi, 2004).

### **6.3.3. CONCLUSIVE FINDING FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

This research question sought to understand if selection experts understand the skills and values that should be assessed when selecting a candidate for a team oriented work environment. For the most part, selection experts are aware of the skills that need assessment; however some additional focus is needed on consideration of the skills grouped under emotional intelligence in this study.

Selection experts need a better understanding of the values that are important when selecting an individual for a team oriented work environment. The lack of understanding in this area compounds the effect of the informal style of assessment used and raises the likelihood of selection error based on an incorrect interpretation of the values that assist team performance. This research has provided a practical model of what values need to be assessed in order to determine if a candidate will add to team performance.

#### 6.4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3

***What evidence is there that organisational selection processes assess candidates for skills and values that assist team performance?***

As in table 8, twelve of the respondents stated that assessment of candidates for team fit was only done informally. None of the remaining respondents indicated that there was a formal procedure built into the selection process to specifically match candidates to the team. These responses are in line with Sekiguchi<sup>§</sup> (2004) study which states that PO fit which is closely aligned with values, was reviewed informally during face-to-face interviews and Piotrowski<sup>§</sup> and Armstrong<sup>§</sup> (2006) study which indicated that very few use selection methods that contribute to assessing fit or values. When viewing the data in table 8, to see what approaches are used in practice to assess candidates for fit to a particular team, there are some core themes that emerge:

TABLE 20: SELECTION PROCESSES IN USE TO SELECT FOR TEAMS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL
<b>Preparatory Work</b>		
1	Prior assessment of team and requirements	13
3	Prior understanding of job skill requirements	9
3	Pre-designed interview questions	9
5	Prior understanding of company values	7
14	Who was the best performer previously	2
15	Selection decision maker engagement	1
15	Team input on what will work best	1

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL
<b>What is assessed</b>		
5	Job related competencies	7
8	Thorough understanding of candidate's motivation	5
12	Culture Conflicts	4
13	Organisational Culture Alignment	3
<b>Selection Process</b>		
2	Informally	12
7	Situational / Scenario based questions	6
8	Multiple inputs	5
8	Observation of behaviour during interviews	5
8	Behaviour assessments	5
15	Candidate culture assessment in social setting	1

What is interesting in the responses was the strong emphasis by all respondents on preparatory work. This falls into the area of job design (Dale, 2003). Although all respondents were asked about selection and a definition of selection was read upfront, sixteen raised process steps related to gaining background information and knowledge of requirements, prior to performing any assessments of candidates. This emphasis is most likely the response when poor information or misinformation has caused selected candidates to be wrong for the required role and fits with Ployhart's and Schneider's (2002) study which shows that the effects of a valid selection process can be nullified by any lack of cooperation in groups and by bottlenecks, shirking and social loafing. This highlights that there is a need to consider steps in the recruitment process outside of selection, to ensure these steps are correctly designed to allow selection processes to function correctly.

TABLE 21: TOP THREE SELECTION DECISION FACTORS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Job related competencies and capability	12	7	5
2	Culture fit	10	7	3
3	Aligned motivators	9	2	7

When looking at actual selection decision factors, the top three ranked responses were by far the most frequently discussed by respondents.

Job related competency was seen as most important and while it is important to assess technical competence, this shows that selection processes have not adapted to focus on assessment of attributes that are important to team oriented environments. To support this statement, communication skills which as per research question 1 are seen as very important for team oriented work environments, were only cited as a top selection decision factor by three respondents. Sekiguchi's (2004) study supports the findings of this study in showing that selection processes have been focused predominantly on assessing PJ fit and while PJ fit is important for transactional roles, PG fit and PO fit are important in relational jobs. Some insight into an additional factor as to why job related competencies are seen to be as important as the responses suggest may be gained in a quote from one of the respondents:

*“When there are skills shortages in the market, companies get less fussy about matching fit and focus on selecting for skill.”*

Culture fit was seen as an important selection decision factor, however when probed for further information, respondents cannot easily define culture fit and how they determine suitability of a candidate's culture. Once again, this is in line with Sekiguchi's (2004) study which states that team fit is assessed informally during face-to-face interviews; however this is not ideal as Grobler and Wörnich (2006) stated that a structured, objective interview process can assist in controlling subjectivity of interview outputs.

Ensuring aligned motivations was also raised, but when questioned further respondents were predominantly referring to the career opportunities going forward being aligned to the candidate's career goals and aspirations. Although this is an element of PE fit as explored by Metzler (2006), none of the respondents referred to the candidate needing to have motivations aligned to the team's and company's functions and visions and therefore are not including assessment of these values and motivations during their selection processes.

#### **6.4.1. CONCLUSIVE FINDING FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

This research question sought to understand what processes were in use in practice that are used to assess candidates for skills and values that help them to contribute to team performance. Interestingly, many respondents stressed the importance of gaining a very thorough understanding of requirements at the job design phase, prior to attraction and selection, in order to ensure the candidates

with the right basic attributes were allowed through screening to the selection phase of recruitment.

It was also found that no formal processes are used in practice to assess candidates for team fit and in general there is a lack of understanding of how to adapt processes to assess for team fit. The most commonly adapted technique in practice for assessing fit is to get multiple company and team representatives to interview the candidate, where possible in different settings, and then to collate their feedback to reach a decision regarding the suitability of the candidate. The literature does not provide any guidance on effective process and therefore the responses provide a useful view of possible approaches that can be used.

#### **6.5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 4**

***Are there barriers to implementing selection processes that focus on the individual's ability to perform within a team?***

This research question was approached in two ways in the interview schedule. The first asked respondents if they felt that values could be accurately assessed during selection and then why they felt the way they did, and the second question asked what barriers they felt exist that prevent a more accurate assessment of candidates for team fit. Three major themes were drawn from the responses indicating what factors inhibit accurate assessment of candidates for team fit; these were time pressures, skill level of selection agents and candidates masking during interviews,

as seen in the two tables below. Table 22 is drawn from tables 11 and 12 above and looks at the reasons given for answers when respondents were asked if they felt it was possible to accurately assess values during selection:

TABLE 22: LIMITATIONS TO ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF VALUES: AGREE  
This table shows the top three results for respondents who agreed or strongly agreed.

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Expertise of selection agent	10	4	6
2	Limited time	8	4	4
3	Candidates mask during selection	6	2	4

Table 23 is drawn from tables 11 and 12 which presented the themes behind the answers given by respondents when they were asked to describe barriers to in-depth assessment of values during selection. As seen in the table below, the results introduce time constraints as a significant theme behind why selection agents cannot more accurately assess candidates during selection; this is in line with the Ryan and Tippins (2004) findings. One respondent raised the following quote:

*“Due to time constraints we often judge values in the first few seconds, which is wrong as we don’t know circumstances and background.”*

TABLE 23: TOP BARRIERS TO IN-DEPTH VALUES ASSESSMENT

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	Time – Need to make decisions quickly	13	6	7
2	Expertise of selection decision makers	10	3	7
3	People mask - deliberately or not deliberately	7	3	4
4	Time – Lack of time with candidate	6	3	3
4	Time – Understanding requirements and team	6	2	4

The three major themes from the results, time pressures, skill level of selection agents and candidates masking during interviews, are discussed below.

*Time pressures.* Respondents indicated that time pressures significantly weighed upon the selection agents' ability to accurately assess team fit during selection. These time pressures were described in three ways, the need to make decisions quickly, lack of time with candidates and lack of time understanding requirements. While time understanding requirements is a component of job design, Kristof-Brown (2000) found that even in a short interview process recruiters need to consider a wide range of candidate characteristics to determine PO fit.

*Skill level of selection agent.* This key theme raised by respondents was that the skill level of the selection agent can impact how good the assessment of the candidate is. When time is a factor, it is even more important that selection agents are appropriately skilled. Kristof-Brown (2000) suggests that recruiters could

benefit from greater guidance as to what makes an candidate a good cultural fit which is aligned to PO fit.

*Candidates masking during selection.* A number of respondents raised that candidates mask or represent themselves in a way that they believe will most likely get them the job. Although this is not necessarily actual misrepresentation, it is difficult to understand the candidates true values and motivations during the selection process because of this behaviour. Dale (2003) raises that during both screening and selection, the recruiter needs to be aware of possible misleading information.

When the respondents were asked what suggestions they could make to change selection processes to allow for a more accurate assessment of fit during selection, a major common point raised was to allow for more interaction with candidates during selection as per the table below:

TABLE 24: TOP APPROACHES SUGGESTED BY RESPONDENTS

Rank	Constructs	TOTAL	Company Selection Decision Maker	External Recruitment Professionals
1	More face-to-face engagement with candidate before selection / Multiple interviews with different company staff	12	5	7
2	Team interviews	9	5	4
3	More time into interview preparation	7	4	3
4	Informal interviews - social setting	6	1	5

This suggested additional time with candidates did not necessarily mean more interviews, which would make the interview process onerous for candidates, but rather including more company representatives in the interactions with the candidates in order to get multiple opinions on the candidates' expected fit. This is in line with Grobler and Wörnich (2006) suggestion of ensuring an objective interview process and reduce the biases, errors and distortions of individual judgements made about a candidate (Dale, 2003).

#### **6.5.1. CONCLUSIVE FINDING FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 4**

This research question sought to understand what the barriers are to implementing processes to better assess candidates for team fit. The responses indicate that the largest barrier is time constraints. These constraints prevent a more thorough analysis of requirements prior to selection, reduce the time spent with the candidates which limits the understanding of the candidates' values and motivations, and create a need to make decisions quickly which forces choices that can lead to selection error. While time constraints present a significant barrier, these constraints are unlikely to change in a world where the pace of business is accelerating. Therefore techniques and processes which improve the information obtained from candidates within these time constraints must be applied. This means that selection agents need to better understand the skills and values that should be assessed and then they should ensure that selection processes are updated to formalise this assessment, a guideline for implementation is presented in the *a posteriori* model within this research.

## **6.6. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 5**

***Is there a difference in how the two different sample groups, being company selection decision makers and external recruitment professionals, view selection for team oriented work environments?***

This research question sought to determine whether there was a difference in responses between the two sample groups. It is important to understand that where the groups differ and what the reasons for this are as this could provide insight as to why each of the groups have not formalised evaluation of candidates for team fit during selection. Analysis will be completed in line with the research questions as below:

### **6.6.1. ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES IN RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

The major difference between the two sample groups for this question was in response to the first question which asked the level to which they agreed with the statement provided: *There is not enough focus on team fit within current selection processes*. While no external recruitment professionals disagreed with this statement, five of the ten company respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. However when the respondents provided reasons as to why they felt the way they did, the themes raised by the two sample groups were very similar and showed that although there may be a focus on team fit by some companies, assessment of this fit is only done informally.

### **6.6.2. ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES IN RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

Research question 2 looked at the skills and values that respondents felt to be important for teams. There was no significant difference in the skills raised, with communication skills seen as most important by both sample groups. It is interesting however that all ten company respondents felt respect was a key value, with seven of the ten respondents feeling it was one of the most important values for teamwork. Only five of ten external recruitment respondents brought up respect as a key value and only one of these respondents felt respect to be one of the most important values for teamwork. External recruitment respondents focused more on team orientation and purpose as values. As external recruitment professionals are only involved during recruitment and selection and not after the candidate is hired, it is understandable why they see purpose and team orientation as important as these weigh on the company's decision regarding the suitability of the candidate and the candidate's decision about whether or not to take the job. However this may show that external recruitment professionals do not have sufficient insight into what happens after selection that makes company respondents feel respect is so important. On the other hand company selection agents may feel they are due more respect than candidates give them, which is based on an older mindset of the candidate wanting the job and the company being the provider. The difference shows the different challenges faced by the two sample groups, however also highlights that neither group sufficiently understands which values are important predictors of performance in teams.

### **6.6.3. ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES IN RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

Research question 3 examined how existing processes cater for selection for teams. From the responses it can be seen that company respondents believe in involving multiple company representatives in assessing candidates in order to determine culture, while external recruitment respondents feel they need a better prior understanding of job requirements and they use more scenario-based questioning. When it comes to selection decision factors, company respondents focused on culture fit, whereas external recruitment respondents centered on assessing candidates' motivations and ensuring alignment to the company and team. It is understandable why the two groups of respondents have different focuses due to their differing incentives.

### **6.6.4. ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES IN RESEARCH QUESTION 4**

This question sought to understand what barriers exist to being able to accurately assess candidates for team fit during selection. There was only one significant difference in responses where more external recruitment respondents cited skill of the selection decision maker as a factor in ensuring good selection process.

### **6.6.5. CONCLUSIVE FINDING FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 5**

There were a few differences in the themes behind responses given. These differences show that the slightly diverse focuses of the two sample groups' activities could work together in being complementary to selecting a good candidate and thereby have a positive result overall.

## 7. CONCLUSION

### 7.1. REVIEW OF RESEARCH BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND FINDINGS

This chapter will highlight the main findings of this research project, including recommendations to the stakeholders of selecting employees for team fit and outline areas for future research.

The literature review highlights that PO fit is more important than PJ fit when selecting candidates for team oriented or highly relational environments (Sekiguchi, 2007); however assessment for team fit is done informally (Sekiguchi, 2004). The approach used to assess candidates for team fit is based quite closely on the theories surrounding PE fit or in this case PO fit as discussed by Kristoff (1996), which is often operationalised as values (Glew, 2009).

The research sought to better understand which skills and values were seen as important to team fit, how these skills and values are assessed during selection and then why existing selection processes still assess for team fit informally. The *a posteriori* model that has emerged as an extension to the *a priori* model used in the study is presented in this chapter. Recommendations to stakeholders and future research possibilities are also discussed.

Twenty expert interviews were conducted with two sample groups, ten company selection decision makers and ten external recruitment professionals, who have

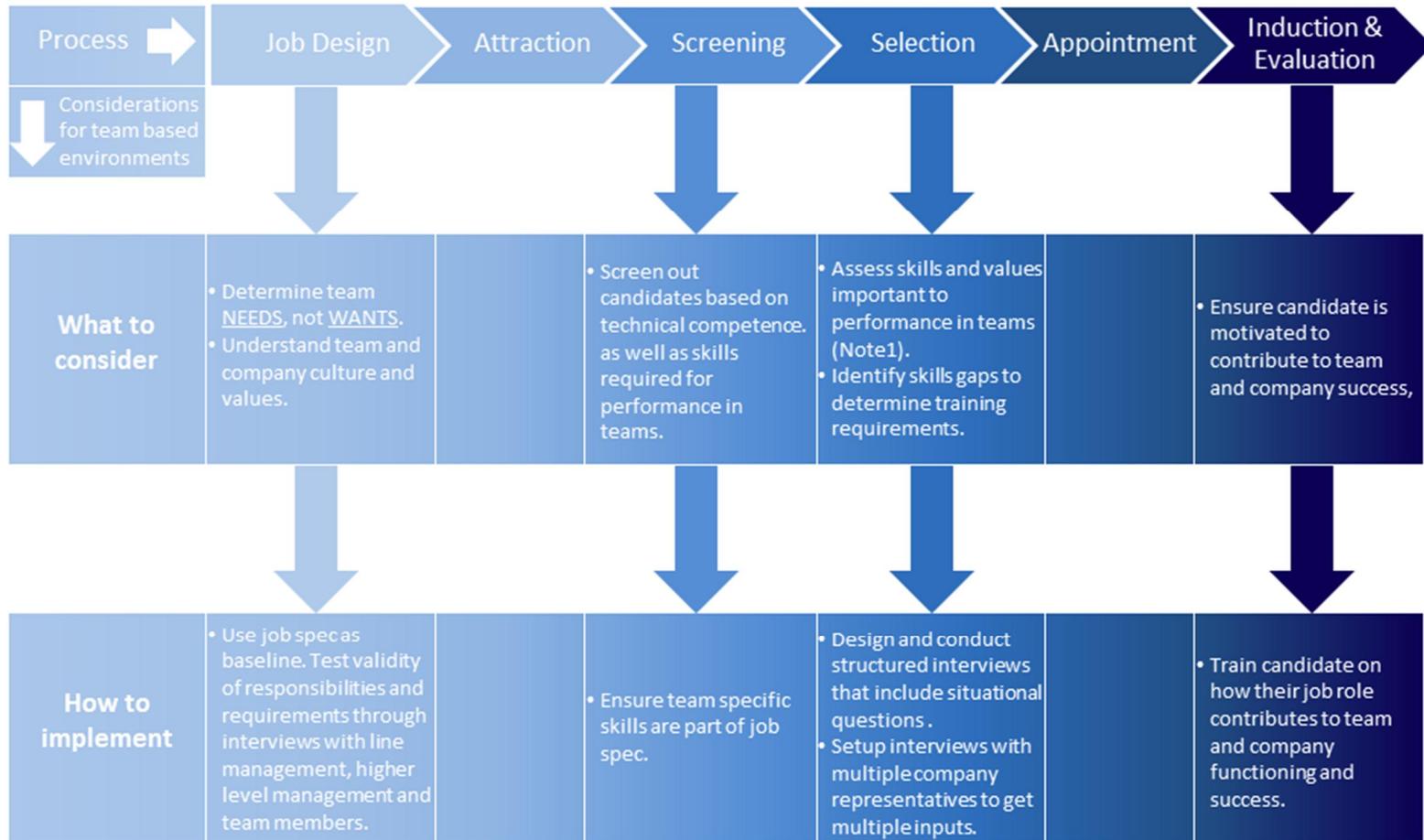
expertise in selection and influence over the processes used for selection within their companies. The research has found that there is no clear understanding of the values needed to determine team fit and that the processes used to assess fit are largely informal as suggested by Sekiguchi (2004).

## **7.2. THE *A POSTERIORI* MODEL OF SELECTION FOR TEAM ORIENTED WORK ENVIRONMENTS**

As an outcome of the research, the *a posteriori* model has been formulated as a practical framework and has extended the existing literature by identifying certain new features to improve selection for teams.

The *a priori* model drawn from the literature looks at the attributes assessed during selection and focuses on looking for alignment of the candidate's skills and values to requirements. Information received in the research interviews coupled with the analysis of the research data showed that it is important to ensure selection agents understand what attributes are important to performance in teams. However, along with this understanding and in order to improve the success of selection for teams, the recruitment process as a whole needs to include some additional steps that assist in determining a candidate's fit for a particular team. These additional steps are presented in the *a posteriori* model diagram below:

**FIGURE 5: THE A POSTERIORI MODEL OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION FOR TEAM ORIENTED WORK ENVIRONMENTS**



Note1: *Skills*. Communication skills, technical competence, emotional intelligence and cognitive skill.

*Values*. Helpfulness, equality, achievement, honesty, autonomy, team orientation, respect, conscientiousness and purpose.

The above model includes insights obtained from the empirical research and contains a guideline of what needs to be considered during each phase of recruitment, as well as a point on how to implement the additional steps.

### **7.2.1. PURPOSE AND APPLICATION OF THE A POSTERIORI MODEL**

The *a posteriori* model of recruitment and selection for team oriented work environments integrates the results from the research process to demonstrate considerations for the recruitment and selection process when selecting candidates for teams. In addition, it provides insight into what generic attributes candidates need to possess in order to contribute to team performance. The *a posteriori* model illustrates a practical approach that will assist selection agents in evaluating a candidate's suitability for a team based environment.

### **7.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS**

There are three major stakeholder groups that are involved in and affected by recruitment and selection processes and the components of these processes that evaluate candidates for team fit. These three groups include companies that recruit candidates for team oriented work environments, external recruiters working with these companies and the candidates being evaluated within these processes. Recommendations for each of the three groups are detailed separately below:

### **7.3.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPANIES**

Companies stand a lot to lose if selection processes hire a candidate that does not fit into a particular team or team oriented environment as this candidate may not only fail to contribute to the team, but may also be a disruptive influence leading to reduced team performance. Below are recommendations to be applied during recruitment and selection, aimed at limiting selection error caused as a result of a poor assessment of attributes that help individuals to contribute to team performance:

- Selection decision makers need to be better trained on what attributes contribute to performance in teams in order for them to evaluate these during the recruitment and selection process;
- Recruitment processes need to include more preparatory work in the job design phase in order to ensure company and team needs are accurately recorded to be used as the basis for selection. Poor or inaccurate information given to selection agents will lead to unsuccessful or suboptimal outcomes; and
- Multiple company representatives need to be made available to interview candidates to ensure these representatives can pool their thoughts about each candidate to prevent a single employee potentially making a bad call or a mistake on a hiring decision.

### **7.3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXTERNAL RECRUITMENT**

#### **PROFESSIONALS**

External recruitment professionals typically provide service guarantees to companies which ensure that a refund is given to the company, if a candidate who is hired through an agency either leaves or is asked to leave soon after being hired. Secondly a large percentage of business that external recruitment professionals get from companies is based on the strength of their relationship with that company, which often relates to how good that agency's track record is. This is typically based on the agency submitting good quality candidates for positions, as well as whether or not candidates who were hired by the company that were presented by the agency, perform. In order to improve the success of candidates put forward to companies, recruitment professionals need to try to ensure the candidate fits into the company and the team that they would work in, as follows:

- External recruitment professionals need to be better trained on what attributes contribute to performance in teams in order for them to evaluate these during the recruitment and selection process.
- External recruitment professionals need more involvement in preparatory work, assisting in determining need rather than wants. A more thorough understanding of the job requirements and tasks, as well as culture, must be gained prior to the search for candidates.
- In order to try to prevent candidates leaving the job within the first couple of months which would require fulfillment of a guarantee, recruitment

professionals need to spend more time understanding candidate motivations and values. These motivations need to be understood not only from a job attractiveness standpoint, but also whether or not there would be alignment between team and company function and candidate motivation.

### **7.3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATES**

Candidates also stand to lose a great deal if they join a team and/or enter an environment for which they are not well suited. This may lead to the candidate performing unsatisfactorily because of a bad PO fit, which in turn could create a bad reference for the candidate and/or could push the candidate to leave which may tarnish their career track record. The research has highlighted two points that candidates can bear in mind to minimise the risk of joining a team that they do not fit well, these points are discussed below:

- Candidates should spend time in interviews understanding team and company purpose, to determine if this aligns to their own motivators. Jobs should not purely be assessed on factors such as salary, location and working hours.
- Candidates should request to meet multiple team members if this is not part of the interview process, in order to get a feel for the values of the people within the team and understand if they are aligned to their own values.

#### **7.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

While teamwork and selection have been well researched, this research has highlighted that there is a gap in the existing literature in the area of selection for teams and this study has begun to explore this gap and has found that there are other approaches to researching this topic that can provide further insight into how selection for teams should be approached.

Areas for further research are suggested below:

- The process outcomes from this study could be tested in a quantitative study to determine which approaches are most often used in practice when selecting for teams. This study could also test the relative success of these processes and provide some insight into which process steps should be focused on in order to reduce selection error. A quantitative study such as this may even be able to be focused on a particular industry or job type.
- Qualitative research could be undertaken in assessing candidates who have left organisations within a short period after joining, in order to understand what role poor fit plays in their decision to leave.
- Further qualitative research can be done by interviewing candidates that have recently joined organisations, to understand how team fit was taken into account during their interview process and whether they believe this added value to the selection process.

- Research candidates to understand what components of fit are important to them and what skills and values they feel help them to fit into teams.
- A longitudinal study could be performed on companies that do and do not consider team fit during selection to determine the relative success of their selection processes.

## 7.5. CONCLUSION

This study has contributed to the body of research around selection by extending the existing understanding of the processes used for selection for team oriented work environments. The research findings have provided a more detailed perspective on what needs to be considered when evaluating a candidate for fit into a team. Presenting the results from this research in an *a posteriori* model offers a graphic and integrated representation for anyone involved in selection that is looking to reduce selection error when selecting candidates for teams. It is hoped that the creation of this practical model will encourage its use by selection agents in refining their selection processes.

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## APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### EMPLOYEE SELECTION FOR TEAM ORIENTED WORK ENVIRONMENTS

- Interviewer introduces himself and thanks respondent for their time
  - Interviewer presents
  - Brief explanation of discussion and dialogue process
  - Assurance of confidentiality, ethical clearance procedures and note taking
- Respondent requested to introduce themselves and provide Background (short)
- Present a description of skills, values and teamwork and contextualise the topic:

The definition of teams used in the study, proposed by Dyer (1984) is that teams are social entities composed of members with high task interdependency and shared and valued common goals. The ability for individuals to work in teams is vital in the modern workplace. A critical lever in facilitating performance of these teams is the selection process used to bring on new team members.

Selection is a step within the greater recruitment and selection process, during which candidates are assessed for employment purposes. Broadly speaking individuals are assessed based on their attributes and these attributes are divided into skills and values for the purpose of the study. Skills are classified as hard competence related attributes and values are classified as an individual's judgements about what is important in life and these values affect the way the individual acts on a day to day basis.

The *a priori* model as below is shown to the respondent and discussed:

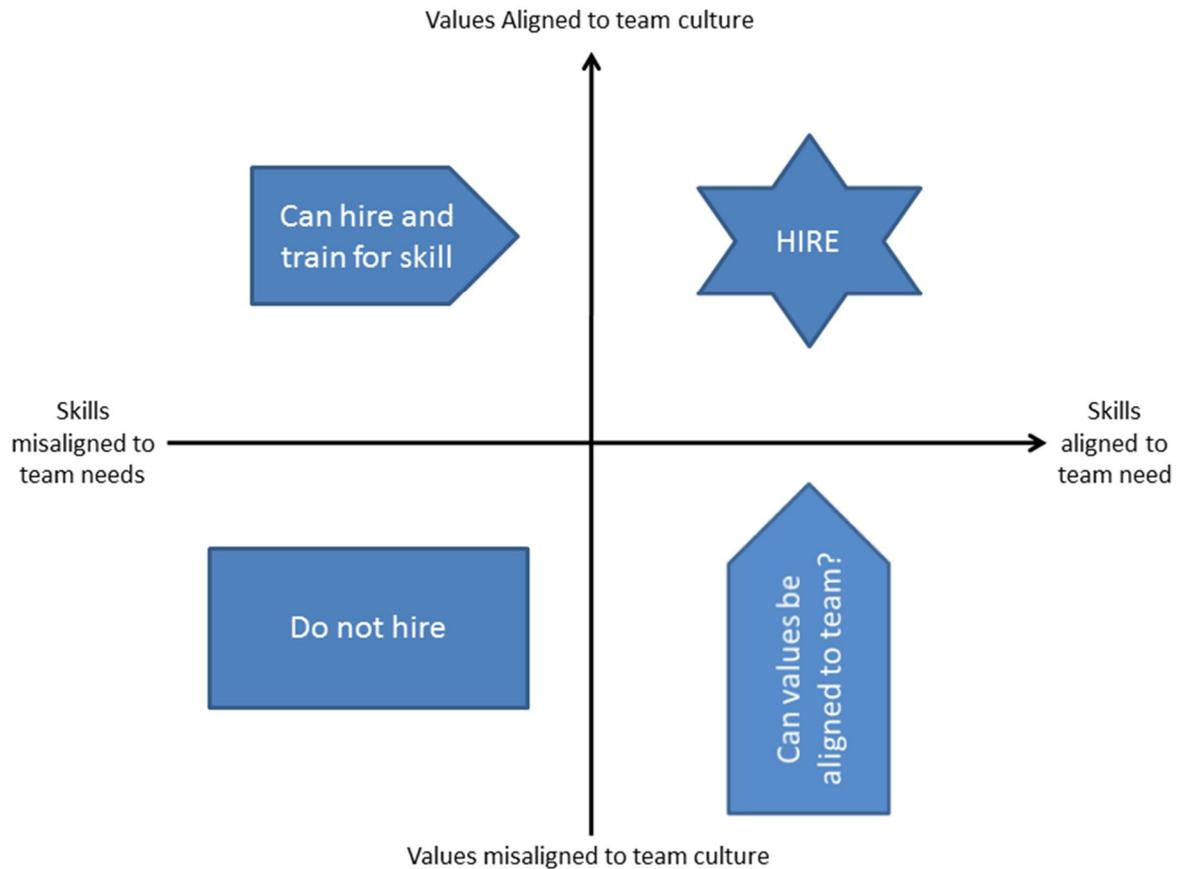


FIGURE 1: A *PRIORI* MODEL FOR TEAM SELECTION

The model above is focused on alignment of skills and values, rather than level of skills and values. As explanation, the model recognises that a highly skilled individual, despite having the correct motivations, may not be correctly skilled for the required job role. The model derived from the available literature suggests that candidate selection should place as much emphasis on assessing alignment of values as evaluating candidate skill.

- Move into interview dialogue using interview schedule as a guide:

## Letter of informed consent

Title of research: **EMPLOYEE SELECTION FOR TEAM ORIENTED WORK ENVIRONMENTS**

I am conducting research on selection processes used within companies to try to understand how they cater for selection for team oriented environments. Our interview is expected to last an hour and will help us to understand how processes could be improved to improve the results of selection processes when selecting for teams. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. Of course all data will be kept confidential. If you have any concerns, please contact me or my supervisor. Our details are provided below:

Neil Hays

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Margie Sutherland

[sutherlandm@gibs.co.za](mailto:sutherlandm@gibs.co.za)

+27 (11) 771 4362

Signature of participant:

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Date:

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Signature of researcher:

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E. 1. It is possible to accurately assess an individual's values during the selection process.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>				

2. Why?

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F. What barriers are there to performing more in depth assessment for team fit during selection?

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G. What are the most important factors you consider in making a selection decision?

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H. If time and resources were not a limitation, in your opinion what approach would help to achieve a better assessment of an candidate's fit into a particular team?

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I. Please select the top three skills and values as raised in questions B and C, which you feel help individuals to contribute to team performance.

SKILL	
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SKILL	
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SKILL	
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VALUE	
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VALUE	
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VALUE	
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J. To what degree can the recruitment expert understand an individual's level of the following values during the selection process? Please rate the following values on a scale of 1 - 10, 10 being a perfect assessment.

**Helpfulness:** Helping and concern for others; the desire to assist others in any reasonably necessary way order to achieve the overall goals of the team; Working for the welfare of others.

VALUE		Helpfulness							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Equality:** Communalism; a familiar form of fairness; everyone's role is as important as one another; brotherhood and equal opportunity for all.

VALUE		Equality							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Achievement:** A sense of accomplishment; a lasting contribution; successfully completing something.

VALUE		Achievement							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Honesty:** Openness, sincerity and truthfulness; adherence to facts; straightforwardness.

VALUE		Honesty							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Autonomy:** Independence and control; self-sufficient; voluntary participation. degree or level of freedom over a job.

VALUE		Autonomy							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

## APPENDIX B – LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Name	Company	Designation
<u>Corporate Selection Specialists</u>		
Prof. Shirley Zinn	Nedbank	Managing Executive: Human Resources
Tania Hector	Nestle	Head of Talent Management and Sourcing
Barbara Serra-Stamps	Fiat	General Manager - Human Resources
Mariane Steyn	Grant Thornton	Human Resources Manager
Rod Burn	Murray and Roberts	Executive
Junian Makgoata	Large International Professional Services Firm	Human Resources Consultant
Benita Kolloori	SAB	Talent Acquisition Consultant
Kasturi Adari	SGS	Senior Human Resources Manager
Carien van Zijl	Actis	Head of HR: Africa
Susan Prinsen	Cargill	HR Manager
<u>Recruitment Professionals</u>		
Joan Labuschagne	Progress HR Solutions	Senior Recruitment Consultant
Jenny Shaughnessy	Consultant	Search & Sourcing Specialist
Diane Laing	Consultant	Search & Sourcing Specialist
Natalie Singer	APSO	APSO Executive: Operations
Loane Sharp	Adcorp	Analyst
Alan Smith	Smith Garb	Partner
Felicity Mesquita	Magnum Personnel	Director
Margot Errington	Quest	Managing Executive: Innovation & Growth
Genevieve Kieser	Consultant	HR Consultant
Val Clifford	Career Direction	Owner

## APPENDIX C – MAPPING OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research Question	Interview Questions	Desired Outcome
<b>Research Question 1:</b> <i>Do selection experts feel there is a need to better assess individuals for expected contribution to team performance during selection?</i>	A. There is not enough focus on team fit within current selection processes.	This research question sought to clarify the need to better assess candidates for team fit. The literature reinforced the importance of teamwork and the impact of selection error. Therefore this question looked to understand if in practice, selection experts have identified a need for improved processes related to selecting for teams.
<b>Research Question 2:</b> <i>Do selection experts understand what skills and values of individuals help them to contribute to team performance?</i>	B. Which skills in individuals do you feel helps them to contribute to team performance? C. Which values in individuals do you feel helps them to contribute to team performance? I. The following question looks to understand to what degree the selection expert can accurately assess an individual's attributes. a. To what degree can the selection expert understand an individual's specific skills and values during the selection process? Please rate the following values on a scale of 1 - 10, 10 being a perfect assessment. b. To what degree can the recruitment expert understand an individual's level of the following values during the selection process?	This research question sought to examine if selection experts within organisations understand what skills and values in individuals help them to perform well in teams. If these selection experts do not understand what attributes help individuals to perform in teams and to assist team performance, assessment for these attributes may be difficult.
<b>Research Question 3:</b> <i>What evidence is there that organisational selection processes assess candidates for skills and values that assist team performance?</i>	D. How does your selection process evaluate candidates for skills and values that help them to contribute to team performance? G. What are the most important factors you consider in making your selection decision?	This research question sought to understand processes and methods used in practice to assist in selecting individuals for teams for two reasons: 1. Actual implemented measures indicate an attempt to address the area as it is recognised as important. 2. There could be methods implemented in practice that differ from existing available theory.

Research Question	Interview Questions	Desired Outcome
<p><b>Research Question 4:</b> <i>Are there barriers to implementing selection processes that focus on the individual's ability to perform within a team?</i></p>	<p>E. It is possible to assess an individual's values during the selection process. F. What barriers are there to performing more in depth assessment for team fit during selection? H. In your opinion what approach would help to select a candidate for fit into a particular team?</p>	<p>This research question sought to examine why existing selection processes do not include assessment of skills and values likely to improve team performance despite available theory on what makes teams perform and in some cases how to select individuals for teams.</p>
<p><b>Research Question 5:</b> <i>Is there a difference in how the two different sample groups, being company selection decision makers and external recruitment professionals, view selection for team oriented work environments?</i></p>	<p>All interview questions</p>	<p>This question sought to identify areas where company selection decision makers' perceptions differ from external recruitment professionals' perceptions in order to understand whether the different pressures they experience have adapted their processes in a way that improves the practice of selection for teams.</p>