

# The influence of non-verbal communication on the hiring manager's evaluation of a candidate during employment interviews

Dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Masters of Business Administration  
at Dublin Business School

Joanna Zienkiewicz

## Declaration

I Joanna Zienkiewicz, declare that this research is my original work and that it has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of Degree or Diploma. In addition, I have referenced correctly all literature and sources used in this work and this work is fully compliant with the Dublin Business School's academic honesty policy.

Signed: Joanna Zienkiewicz

Date: 14/08/2015

## Acknowledgement

I would like to express my appreciation to a number of people that supported me throughout the research process and the overall MBA course.

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Jackie Kennedy, who supported me with her knowledge and advice at each step of my research process. Additionally, I would like to thank my lecturers in Dublin Business School who guided me during the course and helped me achieve my MBA qualification.

Also, I would like to thank the HR programme manager and other hiring managers from the case study organisation that offered their time to participate in my research despite their limited availability. Due to their vast experience within the organisation they were able to provide me with valuable information that benefited my research.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my boyfriend who supported me throughout the MBA course and dissertation writing, and who showed an incredible understanding during this challenging and busy period of my life.

## Abstract

Employment interview remains the most popular selection tool used by majority of organisations. Given its importance, researchers investigated interview predictive validity and the decision-making processes resulting from the interaction of applicants and interviewers. There are ongoing debates whether applicant's physical attractiveness and non-verbal behaviours are positively associated with interviewer evaluations, or whether applicant's resume and verbal responses mostly affect interviewers' hiring decisions.

In this study the author investigates the influence of the applicant's non-verbal communication on the hiring managers' evaluations during employment interviews in an Irish semi-state organisation. In order to respond to the research problem a number of issues need to be investigated such as: the validity of the employment interview in the case study organisation, non-verbal behaviours that predict job performance, relationship between non-verbal communication and personality traits, and interviewer's evaluation process in the interview.

For the purpose of this research, primary data was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with a HR Programme Manager and Hiring Managers from the case study organisation. In addition, the review of the secondary data was undertaken in order to present previous publications and studies on the topic.

The findings of this research enable a number of recommendations for the case study organisation in order to improve the interview validity.

## Table of Contents

Declaration.....	ii
Acknowledgement .....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
List of tables.....	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the problem.....	1
1.2 Aims for the research .....	2
1.3 Scope and limitations of the research .....	2
1.4 Organisation of the dissertation .....	3
1.5 Contribution of the study .....	3
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	5
2.1 Interview as a selection tool.....	5
2.1.1 Interview structure .....	6
2.1.2 Interview stages.....	7
2.1.3 Interview validity .....	8
2.2 Personality traits.....	10
2.2.1 Person-organisation (P-O) fit.....	11
2.2.2 Big Five personality traits .....	11
2.2.3 Characteristics of personality dimensions.....	12
2.2.4 Sales and marketing executive roles .....	13
2.3 Non-verbal communication .....	15
2.3.1 Communication process and non-verbal cues classification.....	15
2.3.2 Physical appearance .....	17
2.3.3 Non-verbal cues .....	18
2.4 Social cognition and decision-making process .....	19
2.4.1 Information processing theory .....	19
2.4.2 Biases and heuristics .....	20
2.4.3 First impression in the employment interview.....	22
2.4.4 Impression management .....	23
2.5 Conclusion .....	24
Chapter 3: Methodology .....	26
3.1 Introduction.....	26
3.2 Research philosophy .....	26
3.3 Research approach .....	27
3.4 Research strategy .....	27
3.5 Research choice .....	28

3.6 Time horizon.....	28
3.7 Data collection .....	29
3.8 Secondary data collection .....	29
3.9 Primary data collection .....	29
3.10 Sampling .....	31
3.11 Ethical issues.....	31
3.12 Limitations to the research.....	32
Chapter 4: Primary research.....	34
4.1 Introduction.....	34
4.2 Interviewee’s profile and identification code.....	34
4.3 Presentation of the findings.....	34
4.3.1 Objective 1: Determining the validity of the employment interview as a selection tool .....	35
4.3.2 Objective 2: Identifying non-verbal behaviours that predict job performance .....	42
4.3.3 Objective 3: Determining a relationship between non-verbal communication and personality traits.....	45
4.3.4 Objective 4: Determining the interviewer’s evaluation process .....	48
Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusion .....	54
5.1 Discussion.....	54
5.1.1 Objective 1: Validity of the employment interview as a selection tool .....	54
5.1.2 Objective 2: Non-verbal behaviours that predict job performance .....	55
5.1.3 Objective 3: Non-verbal communication and personality traits.....	56
5.1.4 Objective 4: Interviewer’s evaluation process .....	57
5.2 Conclusion .....	59
5.3 Recommendations for further research .....	60
Chapter 6: Reflection .....	61
6.1 Doing an MBA course .....	61
6.2 Learning process .....	62
6.3 Time management.....	62
6.4 Dissertation process .....	63
Bibliography .....	65
Appendix 1:.....	71

## List of tables

Table 1: The predictive accuracy of selection methods.....	8
Table 2: Big Five personality dimensions.....	12
Table 3: Taxonomy of non-verbal cues.....	16
Table 4: Interviewees' identification codes.....	33

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Background of the problem

Human resource management has a key employee resourcing function that focuses on strategically integrating managerial efforts to ensure the organisational staffing requirements are met (Raiden *et al.*, 2008 p. 1134). It involves obtaining and retaining the human capital and utilising its productivity (Armstrong, 2006, p. 359). In order to maintain a competitive advantage, companies need to use effective selection tools in identifying quality employees (Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 1056). The majority of organisations look for employees that meet the requirements of the specific job, as well as the requirements of the organisation as a whole (Armstrong, 2006, p. 432). Poor selection brings many negative consequences to the organisation such as: financial cost, poor performance, additional training, a high level of absence and a lack of employee motivation (Torrington *et al.*, 2008, p. 168).

There is no selection tool that is 100% effective in predicting job performance currently available; therefore organisations use a variety of imperfect methods in order to assess applicants' suitability for the employment. The employment interview is the most frequently used technique for selecting employees, however not highly valid and reliable (Arvey & Campion, 1982, cited in Dougherty *et al.*, 1994, p. 659; Armstrong, 2006, p. 432). Given its importance, researchers investigated interview predictive validity and the decision processes resulting from the interaction of applicants and interviewers (Harris, 1989, cited in Dougherty *et al.*, 1994, p 659).

In both popular and academic literature, significant attention has been paid to the role of non-verbal cues in the formation of initial impressions and interviewer selection decisions. There are ongoing debates whether applicant physical attractiveness and non-verbal behaviours are positively associated with interviewer evaluations (Barrick *et al.*, 2009) or whether applicant's resume and verbal responses are the most influential factors that affect interviewers' hiring decisions (Rasmussen, 1984). The potential impact of applicants' non-verbal behaviours on the interviewer evaluation might subsequently affect the validity of the interview. Being humans, our recruitment decisions are vulnerable to subjectivity, biases and other influences, which we should be aware of and take steps to counteract in order to make better and more predictive hiring assessments and decisions.

In this context the author's research examined the influence of the candidate's non-verbal communication on the hiring manager's evaluations during employment interviews.

## **1.2 Aims for the research**

This research was conducted around the following research question:

- What is the influence of candidate's non-verbal communication on the hiring manager's evaluation in the employment interview?

In order to answer the research question several objectives have been set:

1. To determine the validity of the employment interview as a selection tool.
2. To identify non-verbal behaviours that predict job performance.
3. To determine a relationship between non-verbal communication and personality traits.
4. To determine the interviewer's evaluation process in the interview.

In order to respond to these objectives two approaches were undertaken. First, broad literature review has been carried out to gain an overview of the different theories around the topic. Secondly, a qualitative research has been conducted within the semi-state Irish organisation in order to get an insight into the research problem from the hiring managers' perspectives.

## **1.3 Scope and limitations of the research**

The scope for the primary research was narrowed down to a case study of a semi-state Irish organisation. Due to the confidentiality requirements, the name of the organisation remains anonymous. The case study organisation aims to encourage investment into Ireland by foreign-owned companies. Their successful projects have significant impact on the Irish economy. There are two types of recruitment and selection within the company: internal and external and they both vary to some extent. The author focuses mainly on the external selection as it seems to be more relevant to the research problem. The external interviewing process is organised around competencies and has a medium to low level of structure. There are also elements of situational and conventional interviews used during the selection process. The research focuses on the selection process for the marketing-executive positions within the case study company.

There were six semi-structured interviews conducted in the case study organisation. One HR manager and five hiring managers participated in the interviews. Time constraints and the restricted availability of the hiring managers limited the number of possible interviews. A high level of confidentiality could possibly impact the openness and honesty of the participants.

## **1.4 Organisation of the dissertation**

This dissertation consists of six chapters. The first chapter introduced the background of the research topic. Furthermore the objectives of the research questions and objectives are outlined and the choice of research methodology presented.

The second chapter of the dissertation presents theoretical arguments and premises of the research topic and consists of four thematic parts: interview as a selection tool, personality traits, non-verbal communication in the employment interview, and social cognition and the decision-making process.

The third chapter of the dissertation is an explanation of the methodology used in the research together with the rationale of selecting a particular research approach, strategy, data collection technique and sample. Limitation of the chosen methodology is presented at the end of this chapter.

The fourth chapter of the dissertation is a presentation and analysis of data gathered in the primary research in order to meet the research objectives.

The fifth chapter of the dissertation presents a discussion of the findings in relation to the literature review and also outlines the overall conclusion from the study. There are some recommendations to organisations and for further research provided at the end of this chapter.

In the final sixth chapter of the dissertation the author presents a reflection on the overall learning experience throughout the research process and MBA programme, together with the challenges and obstacles met on the way to accomplish the project.

## **1.5 Contribution of the study**

The interview is the most popular selection tool in the majority of organisations. The managers prefer to meet the applicant in person before making a hiring decision in order to assess the aspects of the candidate that cannot be evaluated in any other way. In addition, the selection interview has other benefits such as: the possibility for the candidate to ask questions and creating a positive perception of the company (Torrington *et al.*, 2008, p. 233). Interview is an interaction between people and like every interaction impacts our social perceptions and judgements. Subsequently, interviewers' recruitment decisions are vulnerable to subjectivity, biases and other influences which can reduce the interview validity. Non-verbal communication is an integral part of peoples' interaction and can also impact interviewers'

evaluation. Therefore, in order to avoid biased judgement and enhance the validity of the interview, the interviewers should be aware of the possible influence of unspoken but meaningful communication. Accurate decoding of non-verbal cues can be helpful in assessing some aspects of the candidate (DeGroot and Gooty, 2009, p. 190). The interview structure can also impact the validity of the interview (Salgado and Moscoso, 2002).

This research can contribute to the Human Resource Management (HRM) study by providing the hiring managers' perspectives regarding the issues outlined in the dissertation. There has been quite a lot of focus on the presented topic in the social psychology in recent years; however there is no agreement between scholars whether non-verbal behaviours have an impact on the interviewers' evaluation during the employment interview. This qualitative research looks at the issue from the inside of the particular organisation and provides views and opinions of the hiring managers themselves. Their views and opinions may be important to justify how this issue is reflected in practice. Sometimes theory and reality may vary; therefore it is beneficial to investigate the practical side of the interview reality from a case study. It can provide a deeper understanding of the topic and subsequently may improve the effectiveness of the interview as a selection tool. The estimated cost to replace an employee can range from two to four times his or her annual earnings (Adidam, 2006, cited in Oliphant *et al.*, 2008, p. 93); therefore it is crucial to improve the effectiveness of the employment interview. Despite the fact that there are other more reliable selection tools available, organisations will not stop using face-to-face interviews as a selection tool for many reasons.

This research is also important from an author's career perspective in the recruitment and selection field of HRM. The author plans career progression in recruitment and selection and this research can provide some recommendations that can be implemented in the author's practice. Improving interviewing skills through understanding the non-verbal aspect of the interview process will be of great value to the author.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1 Interview as a selection tool

In order to maintain a competitive advantage, companies need to use effective selection tools in identifying quality employees (Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 1056). The Majority of organisations look for employees that meet the requirements of the specific job, as well as the requirements of the organisation as a whole, known as organisational fit (Armstrong, 2006, p. 432). There is a variety of selection methods available including: different types of interviews, reference check, tests for specific skills, general ability tests, literacy and numeracy tests, personality/aptitude questionnaires, assessment centres, group exercises (e.g. role-playing) and online tests (Recruitment, Retention and Labour Turnover, Survey Report, CIPD, 2008, cited in Beardwell and Claydon, 2010, p. 174). Despite the wide choice of selection methods organisations retain interview as the most popular selection tool for all occupational groups (Armstrong, 2006, p. 432). Moreover, applicants expect interviews as part of a selection process (Lievens *et al.*, 2003, cited in Macan, 2009, p. 203). According to Arvey & Campion (1982, cited in Dougherty *et al.*, 1994, p. 659) and Armstrong (2006, p. 441) this most frequently used selection tool is also one of the least valid and reliable. Given its importance, researchers have focused on both the interview predictive validity and the decision processes resulting from the interaction of applicants and interviewers (Dougherty *et al.*, 1994, p. 659). A large body of research aimed at establishing the degree of reliability and validity of the interview process, and at understanding and improving interview technology (Carlson *et al.*, 1971, cited in Forbes and Jackson, 1980, p. 65).

According to Torrington *et al.* (2008, p. 232) employment interview is a controlled conversation with a specific purpose. The interviewers aim to gather information about the candidates that will enable to predict their job performance. Another purpose of the employment interview is to provide the candidates with full details of the job and organisation in order to support their decision-making. In addition, during the employment interview the candidates are given the opportunity to raise their questions regarding the job and the organisation. The interview is a relatively unreliable predictor of job performance due to its subjectivity and biases, and also can be negatively affected by poor interviewing skills of the interviewers. Such criticism is particularly addressed at unstructured interviews (Beardwell and Claydon, 2010 p. 174). However, as stated by Torrington *et al.* (2008, p. 233) there are ritual elements of the interview that enable some assessments that cannot be approached in any other

way e.g. compatibility of people who will have to work together. The employment interview gives the candidates a feeling that they matter as the interviewers are devoting their time to meet them in person. This can create a positive perception of the organisation and fairness of the selection process. The majority of managers prefer to meet the candidates in person before making a hiring decision in order to avoid any surprises in terms of their physical appearance, social or business interactions, and organisational fit. There are also other reasons for the interview popularity such as company tradition and policies, a lack of resources for more elaborate methods and reluctance to change this familiar and relatively easy selection method (Oliphant *et al.*, 2008, p. 95).

### **2.1.1 Interview structure**

Selection interviews are a complex measurement procedure and different interview types assess different constructs. This can impact the interview validity (Salgado and Moscoso, 2002, p. 313). Depending on the level of structure the interview's accuracy might vary significantly. Milar *et al.* (1992, cited in Owen, 2006, p. 454) state that the level of the interview structure relates to the degree of interviewer's flexibility regarding interview content and evaluation. Unstructured interviews have no standardisation of the questioning order, and the interviewer decides whether to ask follow-up, probing and elaboration-type of questions (Campion *et al.*, 1997, cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 455). Therefore, the reliability of unstructured interview is low as the interviewers do not agree among themselves regarding the type of questions and evaluations of candidates' responses. In addition, the interviewers vary between themselves in terms of their hiring standards that they base their decisions on. Different levels of reliability between structured and unstructured interviews may explain the disparity in the validity of these types of interviews (Judge, 2000, p. 385).

Usually questions in unstructured interviews are related to opinions, attitudes, aspirations and goals, self-descriptions and self-evaluations. According to Salgado and Moscoso (2002, p. 316) unstructured conventional interviews assessed personality dimensions and social skills while the structured behavioural interviews focus more on the job knowledge, job experience, situational judgement and social skills. As Hargie (2006, p. 455) states, unstructured interviews give the candidates an opportunity to express themselves and present fully their credentials (Hargie, 2006, p. 455, 456). According to Bakker and Bakker (2002, cited in Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 1056) more than 60% of organisations prefer to conduct low structured interviews; and 89% of interviewers in the Van Der Zee *et al.* (2000, cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 456) research did not use any rating scales for evaluating responses. Chen *et al.* (2008, p. 1057) state that

interviewers prefer relatively low level of interview structure as they can have higher discretion over interview questions and establish informal contact with the candidate. However, trained interviewers tend to have a more positive attitude towards highly structured interviews.

According to Motowidlo *et al.* (1992, p. 571) conducting structured interviews involves the consistent application of predetermined rules for questioning, observation and evaluation of the candidate's responses. Questions in structured interviews are only job-related and based on the current job analysis. In highly structured interviews questions are asked in a standardised way that is applied to all candidates, and the interviewers are prohibited from asking any probing, prompting or elaboration questions. However, in many structured interviews there are a number of planned follow-up questions allowed (Hargie, 2006, p. 458). In order to improve the evaluation process scholars highlight the importance of note-taking during the interview as well as behaviourally-anchored rating scales and scoring guides (Macan, 2009, p. 206).

There are two main types of structured interviews that vary in terms of their content: situational interviews, first described by Latham (1980) and behaviour description interviews, also known as competency-based interview, first described by Janz in 1982 (Motowidlo *et al.* 1992, p. 571). According to Armstrong (2006, p. 447) competency-based interviews are focused on behavioural competencies, fundamental skills and capabilities required to achieve a satisfactory level of job performance and defined from a job analysis. The main assumption of competency-based interviews is that past behaviours are the best predictors of future job performance (Oliphant *et al.*, 2008, p. 96; Armstrong, 2006, p. 448). Interviewers ask standard questions about the candidates' past situations and decisions in their previous employment (Motowidlo *et al.* 1992, p. 572). Situational interviews, described as critical-incident interviews, are future-oriented and consist of questions on how the candidates would handle hypothetical situations in the job environment (Armstrong, 2006, p. 447).

### **2.1.2 Interview stages**

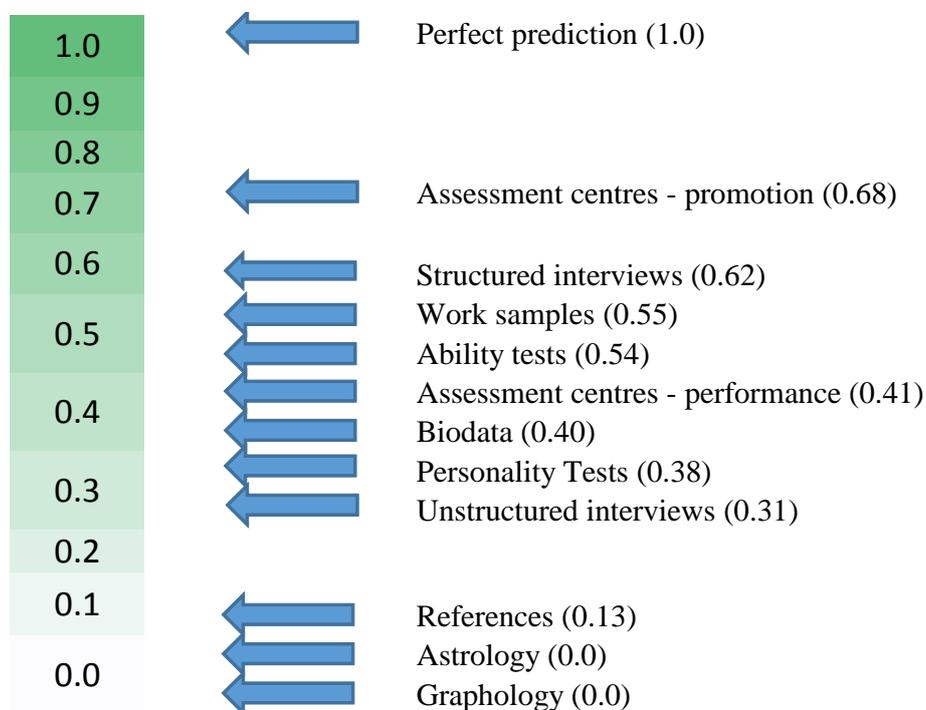
Depending on the type and purpose, interviews vary in terms of structure, however the majority of interviews consist of three stages: opening, middle and closing. The middle stage of the interview can be approached in multiple ways depending on the type and purpose of the interview. The main objective of the interview opening is to build rapport with the candidate, make mutual initial assessment, make the candidate feel comfortable and create trust and openness (Torrington *et al.*, 2008, p. 240; Armstrong, 2006, p. 457). According to Barrick *et al.* (2012, p. 346) some organisations are trying to reduce rapport building in highly structured

interviews. The interviewers read a script at the beginning of the interview that explains the structured interview process. However, most of the companies are reluctant towards eliminating rapport building due to the potential negative candidate’s impression of the interviewer and the organisation (Chapman and Zweig, 2005, cited in Barrick *et al.*, 2012, p. 346). Stevens (1998, cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 461) highlights the importance on the closing stage of the interview also known as the disengagement scene. As the hiring decision is usually not formally made at this point, it is crucial to acknowledge the candidate effort and time without raising any expectations and give the candidate an opportunity to ask questions (Dipboye, 1992, cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 461).

### 2.1.3 Interview validity

The below diagram presents the accuracy of the employment interview in comparison to other selection methods. In a scale zero to one (one as a perfect prediction) structured employment interview shows lower accuracy only in comparison to the assessment centre. However, the unstructured interview’s accuracy is rated much lower than the other selection methods such as assessment centres, work samples, ability tests, biodata and personality tests.

**Table 1: The predictive accuracy of selection methods**



Source: Anderson and Shackleton, 1993, cited in Beardwell and Claydon, 2010 p. 178

While considering the effectiveness of interviews many scholars such as Judge *et al.* (2000), Huffcut *et al.* (2013) and McDaniel *et al.* (1994) reported lower validity of unstructured

interviews in comparison to highly structured interviews. McDaniel *et al.* (1994, p. 607) estimated the validity to be 0.44 for structured interviews and 0.33 for unstructured interviews. Another study of Huffcutt and Arthur (1994, cited in Judge, 2000, p. 388) assessed the validity of structured interviews at the higher value of 0.57. As the below diagram shows the validity of structured interviews estimated by Anderson and Shackleton (1993) is 0.62 and the validity of unstructured interviews is 0.31. Schmidt and Zimmerman (2004, cited in Huffcutt *et al.*, 2013, p. 272) implicated that structured interviews can have the same potential to predict job performance than unstructured interviews and they can reach the same level simply by adding more interviewers. However, Huffcutt *et al.* (2013, p. 272) disagree that unstructured interviews can reach the same level of prediction. Also McDaniel *et al.* (1994) state that the reliability of board interviews is higher while the validity appears to be lower at 0.32 than individual interviews 0.43. There is also a disparity between the assessments of validity regarding different format of structured interviews. The McDaniel *et al.*, (1994) meta-analysis suggested that situational interviews are more valid than behavioural interviews; however the studies of Campion (1994, cited in Judge *et al.*, 2000, p. 389) showed contradicting results.

Despite the fact that structured interviews are considered to have higher validity than unstructured interviews, several surveys suggest that more than 60% of companies still prefer low structured interviews in their selection process (Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 1056; Highhouse and De Corte, 2005, cited in Barrick *et al.*, 2012, p. 331). The reasons behind this preference lies the interviewers' attitudes, subjective perceived norms, knowledge about the selection process and sense of control. According to Lievens and De Paepe (2004) many interviewers prefer to have a higher control over the interview questions in order to establish informal contact with the candidate. According to Chen *et al.* (2008) and Dipboye (1994) interviewers with high need for power would prefer lower structured interviews in order to satisfy this need. They can obtain power by controlling the decision-making processes. In addition, rapport building at the beginning of the interview puts candidates at ease and is viewed favourably by most interviewers (Barrick, 2012, p. 331). On the other side interviewers who completed training regarding the interviewing method tend to use more structured interviews (Chapman and Zweig, 2005, Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 1057).

Salgado and Moscoso (2002), McDaniel *et al.* (1994) and Judge (2000) state that the validity of the selection interview is now much greater than previously believed and the interview techniques has been improved. In order to increase the effectiveness of the selection process organisations implement more structured interview formats, use additional selection methods

(Beardwell and Claydon, 2010 p. 178) and provide training to the interviewers (Armstrong, 2006). As adopting either a highly structured or unstructured interview format may fail some of the objectives of interviewing, it is important to consider a more flexible approach that will provide the consistent and effective assessment, allow the candidates to present fully their skills and qualities, and facilitate a positive candidate's experience during the interview (Hargie, 2006, p.460). Scholars proposed a variety of methods in order to achieve this such as: modifying the degree of structure within a single interview (Kohn and Dipboye, 1998; Chapman and Rowe, 2001; Campion *et al.*, 1997; cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 460, Posthuma *et al.*, 2002,) and carry out more than one interview where each of them has its own purpose (Blackman and Funder, 2002, cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 460). Using panel interviews may also add value to the selection process by saving a time, enabling quicker decision, reducing interviewer bias, and ensuring that the candidate is acceptable by the representative from different sectors of the organisation (Campion *et al.*, 1997, cited in Macan, 2009, p. 2007; Torrington *et al.*, 2008, p. 236). However, panel interviews limit the possibility of rapport building and discussion development between the candidate and the panel members due to their formal nature (Torrington *et al.*, 2008, p. 236). Recent findings suggest that using panel interviews might decrease interview validity due to individual differences among interviewers (Dipboye *et al.*, 2001), effects of social dynamics and group decision-making process, political games and power struggles (Bozionelos, 2005, cited in Macan, 2009, p. 208), and also the way ratings are combined.

## **2.2 Personality traits**

Interviews measure a variety of psychological constructs. According to Salgado and Moscoso (2002) conventional interviews usually focus on general mental ability (GMA), social skills, and personality characteristics such as emotional stability and extraversion. They also assess job experience, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness, but to a lower extent. The results of the authors' meta-analysis indicate that behavioural interviews measure mainly job experience and knowledge, social skills and situational judgement, and also moderately GMA. There was no correlation found between personality dimensions and behavioural structured interviews which indicate that personality is not being measured in this type of interview. Huffcutt *et al.* (2001, cited in Van Dam, 2003, p. 43) found that personality traits and social skills are the most common constructs assessed during interviews.

### **2.2.1 Person-organisation (P-O) fit**

In addition to person-job fit (P-J) interviewers also assess person-organisation fit (P-O) during employment interviews. P-O fit is “the match between the candidate’s personal characteristics and the organisation’s cultural characteristics” and it is related to the individual’s goals, personality, values (Kutcher *et al.*, 2013, p. 294), needs and interests (Judge *et al.*, 2000, p. 393). Organisations use values to develop guidelines for acceptable workplace behaviour, while individuals use values to evaluate their jobs and make choices regarding their involvement in organisational activities. When there is a congruence between these values, the employees tend to describe their jobs more favourably and will choose to remain in the organisation (Kim *et al.*, 2013, p. 3721). Therefore P-O fit can impact the level of employee turnover.

According to Judge and Higgins (2004) the candidate’s use of influence tactics impacts the organisational fit perception. P-O fit is based on perceived similarities in beliefs and attitudes about important organisational values and the ingratiation tactics increase the interviewer’s perception of similarity e.g. by using opinion conformity. Also Chen *et al.* (2008, p. 216) and Garcia *et al.* (2008) agree that interviewer’s perceived similarity has a great impact on the perceived candidate’s P-O fit. Kristof-Brown *et al.* (2002, cited in Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 216) highlighted an importance of the candidate’s non-verbal behaviours in developing the perception of similarity. According to Judge *et al.* (2000, p. 397) interviewers assessing P-O fit are more likely to be affected by information-processing biases (e.g. stereotyping, contrast effect or snap decision-making) and therefore the authors suggest conducting more structured situational or behavioural interviews in order to decrease a risk of error in judgement.

### **2.2.2 Big Five personality traits**

Many scholars agree that candidate’s personality is an important component that impacts the interview outcome and also is taken into account while assessing person-organisation fit. Therefore, there are many studies carried out to find out what specific personality traits are required for different types of jobs (Cook *et al.*, 2000; Dipboye and Gaugler, 1993, cited in Van Dam, 2003, p. 43; Posthuma *et al.*, 2002, p. 30). Mount *et al.* (1994, p. 272) proposed a model of five personality dimensions that has become a popular framework used by many researchers. The Big Five model has been criticised for being too broad and some studies show the importance of using narrow personality traits in the prediction and explanation of job performance (Dudley *et al.*, 2006, p. 40).

The below table presents the Big Five personality dimensions and specific labels and prototypical characteristics associated with them.

**Table 2: Big Five personality dimensions**

Extraversion	Sociable, talkative, assertive, ambitious, active
Agreeableness	Good-natured, cooperative, trusting
Conscientiousness	Responsible, dependable, able to plan, organised, persistent, achievement oriented
Emotional stability (Neuroticism)	Calm, secure, not nervous
Openness to experience	Imaginative, artistically sensitive, intellectual

Source: Mount *et al.* (1994, p. 272)

According to Barrick and Mount (1994) only one personality dimension conscientiousness is a valid predictor in all occupational groups and all job related criteria. The findings of DeGroot and Gooty (2009, p.187) indicates that conscientiousness mediate the relationship between the visual cues and interview ratings regarding managerial positions. Also extraversion is seen as a valid predictor of job performance in jobs with a large social component such as sales and management. A study conducted by Van Dam (2003) also shows that all five personality dimensions have an influence on the interviewer’s assessment; however conscientiousness and emotional stability were rated the highest. While openness to experience has been mentioned quite often by the interviewers, extraversion and agreeableness were related to the judgement only occasionally. According to Morgeson *et al.* (2007) personality is not a good predictor of job performance as the validity of personality test and other personality measures is very low. According to Roth et al. (2005, cited in Macan, 2009, p. 208) there is no correlation between five personality dimensions and the interview outcome in highly structured interviews.

### 2.2.3 Characteristics of personality dimensions

Hogan (1996, cited in Chen *et al.*, 2011, p. 287) states that people developed strategies to ‘get along’ with others by cooperating and complying and to ‘get ahead’ of others by achieving status and recognition. Extraversion and agreeableness are associated with ‘get along’ strategies that affect interpersonal communication, while conscientiousness is related to ‘get ahead’ strategies, motivation and interview preparation. The personality trait of agreeableness is related to interpersonal intimacy, and people who express a high level of agreeableness tend to be warm, polite altruistic and sympathetic. Therefore, employees who are agreeable tend to

accept task assignment without questioning and are more flexible in work (Weng and Chang, 2015, p. 4). According to Lieberman and Rosenthal (2001, p. 306) extraverts are more socially skilled due to their better decoding of non-verbal communication. They are more sociable, friendly and talkative, also optimistic, energetic and assertive (Watson and Clark, 1997, cited in Barrick *et al.*, 2011, p. 334). According to Weng and Chang (2015, p. 3) extraverts are more likely to seek new experience, and more difficult and challenging assignments, which enable them to achieve reputation and recognition by their leaders. People with a higher level of conscientiousness tend to be more motivated, organised and hardworking (Mount *et al.*, 1994, p. 272). According to Witteman *et al.* (2009, p. 39) people scoring high in conscientiousness have a dominant rational type of thinking that is deliberate, rule-governed, primary verbal and conscious. The candidate who leans forward toward the interviewer and hold eye contact might be perceived as more direct, honest and conscientious. Similarly, the candidate who smiles more frequently and varies the pitch of his/her voice during the interview might be perceived as extraverted and sociable (DeGroot and Gooty, 2009, p.181). According to Chen *et al.*, 2011, p. 295) applicants with higher level of extraversion would demonstrate more impression management tactics during the interview and their need for interacting with others can create a favourable person-job fit perception. On the other hand applicants with higher level of conscientiousness are more likely to be prepared and learn about the company before the interview, which can create good person-organisation fit perception. According to Borkenau and Liebler (1992, cited in Burnett and Motowidlo, 1998, p. 968) non-verbal cues such as smiling, eye contact and gaze, rapid body movement, special proximity and physical attractiveness are associated with extraversion. Conscientiousness seems to be linked with relaxed posture and aspects of dress, or appearance. In addition, varied voice pitch and faster rates of speech are also associated with perception of extraversion and competence (Scherer, 1979, cited in DeGroot and Motowidlo, 1999, p. 987). According to Salgado and Moscoso (2002, p. 314) candidates that are perceived as relaxed, calm, self- controlled, sociable, extraverted, energetic and able to work in teams are will be more successful in getting a job.

#### **2.2.4 Sales and marketing executive roles**

According to DeGroot and Motowidlo (1999, p. 986) managerial jobs require successful interpersonal interaction for effective performance. Therefore, the successful managers need to communicate persuasively with their subordinates, peers and superiors and also have influencing skills. They need to develop trust, liking and credibility in order to become effective. Managerial social stereotype is characterised by specific personality traits such as

extraversion and conscientiousness, and to a degree agreeableness (Judge, 2002). Also Krekeler (2010) and Politis and Politis (2012, p. 337) agree that conscientiousness is a valid predictor of leadership behaviours. Leaders who score high in the conscientiousness are well organised, dependable, persistent, responsible and self-disciplined. These managers will carry out ethical and effective leadership as they value cooperation, trust and justice. In addition, Politis and Politis (2012, p. 338) found that emotional stability has a significant importance regarding leadership and organisations should not employ or promote managers that score high in negative affectivity.

Lounsbury *et al.* (2014) conducted a study on the Big Five personality dimensions and also other narrow personality traits for the sales manager roles. Their findings suggest that sales manager roles require a higher level of extraversion, assertiveness, optimism, customer service and image management. The authors concluded that an appropriate professional image is very important in sales and marketing while dealing with external and internal customers. It involves corporate image, reputation management, professional dress and attire, also international and cross-cultural manners. The managers involved in the Lounsbury *et al.* (2014) study scored lower in conscientiousness and agreeableness which contradict with the Judge (2002) findings. The low score on conscientiousness might be related to the selection bias of hiring salespeople that are less methodical and systematic. On the other hand, a low score in agreeableness might suggest that sales occupation mainly involves individual contribution rather than teamwork. Sales people are usually characterised as high-performers and their performance is largely based on their individual sales (Lounsbury *et al.*, 2014, p. 248). Sitser *et al.* (2013, p. 144) see conscientiousness as a valid predictor of job performance for sales occupations; however a high level of openness predicts the number of new customers achieved. Agreeableness was an effective predictor in customer relationship management. Mount *et al.* (1994, p. 278) suggest that from the customer's perspective, sales representatives perform better if they are more conscientious, extraverted and agreeable. Yang *et al.* (2011, p. 378) suggest that conscientiousness is a valid predictor of job performance in sales; however this influence is fully mediated by self-efficacy. Their finding support other recent studies within social psychology e.g. Judge *et al.* (2007), Ng *et al.* (2008). Also extraversion has an impact on job performance and this relationship is partly mediated by self-efficacy.

Tsai *et al.* (2012, p. 61) highlights the importance of non-verbal cues especially in the jobs with customer-contact requirements where the nature of these roles will involve interactions with external or internal customers. Physical appearance and the ability to effectively use non-verbal

communication become more important for sales representatives than mechanics or plumbers. The study of DeGroot and Motowidlo (1999, p. 986) indicates that there are certain visual and vocal cues displayed during employment interviews that can affect interviewer's evaluation and predict managerial job performance. Burnett and Motowidlo (1998, p. 977) found that physical attractiveness and gaze had a significant influence on the interviewer's judgement. Vocal cues can also impact personal impression and affect interviewer's judgement. While higher pitch usually creates a positive impression for women in some jobs, management roles would be stereotypically associated with lower pitch and stronger voice for both men and women (DeGroot and Motowidlo, 1999, p. 987).

### **2.3 Non-verbal communication**

Communication generally has verbal and non-verbal components. Verbal communication often refers to the words we use to communicate and it accounts for only a small amount of the messages that people send and receive. Researchers say that between 70% of the entire communication spectrum is non-verbal (Lawton, 2006, p. 3; Gupta, 2013, p. 36). Non-verbal communication, also known as meta-communication, is all the messages that people communicate beyond speaking or writing (Stanton, 2009, p. 3).

#### **2.3.1 Communication process and non-verbal cues classification**

According to the dramaturgical perspective, an actor's performance combines of his or her appearance, words spoken and non-verbal behaviours (Gardner, 1992, cited in Tsai et al., 2012, p. 62). Each of these elements can influence other peoples' perception of the actor. It can also be applied to the employment interview setting, where applicant's verbal responses, non-verbal behaviours and physical appearance may influence interviewer evaluation. The difference usually lies in interviewer's message processing regarding these elements. Verbal responses are likely to trigger systematic information processing while non-verbal cues and physical appearance may cause heuristic processing of messages (Burgoon and Hoobler, 2002, cited in Tsai *et al.*, 2010, p. 62). The non-verbal communication process happens between the encoder (actor) that sends the behaviours and the decoder (observer) that receives the presented behaviour and interprets in a particular way. Non-verbal behaviours have strong communicative function by accentuating, repeating or modifying the meaning of verbal communication (Burgoon and Hoobler, 2002, cited in Tsai et al., 2010, p. 73; Burnett and Motowidlo, 1998, p. 976). They also communicate feelings, intentions, and thoughts, and express stable psychological characteristics such as personality (Weisbuch and Ambady, 2009, p. 1114). These non-verbal behaviours can represent intended or unintended messages

(Dittmann, 1978, cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 81) that in most cases inferences are made extremely quickly, even in mere milliseconds (Bar et al., 2006; Williams et al., 2004, cited in Weisbuch and Ambady, 2009, p. 1104). According to Gupta (2013, p. 36) most non-verbal messages are involuntary and represent unplanned physical responses. Therefore, this form of communication tends to be perceived as more honest and authentic than verbal communication or even conscious non-verbal communication. Wiener et al. (1972, cited in Argyle and Colman, 1995, p. 79) distinguished between non-verbal communication and non-verbal behaviours. The authors state that non-verbal behaviours are communicative only when information sent out through them is accurately and appropriately interpreted by the decoder, and it needs to be intentional. It was argued that non-verbal communication may also occur against the intentions of the encoder or unconsciously. Sometimes neither encoder nor decoder of the transmitted message is able to identify non-verbal behaviours (Argyle and Colman, 1995, p. 79). The below table shows the taxonomy of non-verbal cues.

**Table 3: Taxonomy of non-verbal cues**

Classification	Examples
Body language (kinesics)	Movements of hands, head (e.g. nodding), foot, leg, postural shifts, gestures (e.g. handshake), eye movement (e.g. eye contact), facial expressions (e.g. smile)
Content-free vocalisation and patterns associated with speech (paralanguage)/ use of time and silence in communication	Voice pitch, volume, frequency, stuttering, filled pauses e.g. 'ah', silent pauses, interruptions, measures of speech rate and number of words spoken in a given unit of time
Physical contact (haptics)	Touching
Physical environment (proxemics)	Interpersonal spacing and norm of territoriality
Physical characteristics of people (artifactual communication)	Physical attractiveness, skin colour, body shape, body odour, perfume, clothing, jewellery, wigs, hairstyle, make up

Source: Knapp, 1972, cited in Hargie, 2006, p. 80; Knapp and Hall, 1992, cited in Tsai *et al.*, 2012, p. 60; Gupta, 2013, p. 36.

### 2.3.2 Physical appearance

Scholars have been long interested in the effects of candidate's non-verbal cues in the job interview context. Individually, physical attractiveness and non-verbal behaviours have been found to have positive effects on interview outcomes (Barrick *et al.*, 2011). There are ongoing debates around this matter and some scholars e.g. Rasmussen (1984) and Tsai *et al.* (2010) argued that non-verbal behaviours may have little effect on interview ratings when the quality of other information sources such as resume and verbal information varies widely among the applicants. The Tsai *et al.* (2010, p. 72) findings suggest that physical attractiveness predicts interviewer evaluation above and beyond the candidate's verbal responses and qualifications, especially in jobs with a customer-contact requirements. Many scholars support the idea that physical attractiveness, especially facial beauty stereotype has an impact on various areas of social judgement (Dion *et al.*, 1972, Zebrowitz, 1997, cited in Pansu and Dubois, 2002, p.16; Watkins and Johnston, 2000; Barrick *et al.*, 2009). They suggested there is cognitive schema associated with facial beauty that guides our judgement of others. Physically attractive people are assumed to possess more positive qualities than unattractive people (Alley & Hildebrandt, 1988, cited in Pansu and Dubois, 2002, p. 16; Aronson, 2012, p. 371). However this judgement bias relates mainly to the personality traits such as: sociability, popularity and extroversion, and in this case physically attractive people are judged more favourably than those less attractive. Thus when the traits are work related, physical attractiveness is a much less influential factor (Eagly, Ashmore, Makhijani and Longo, 1991, cited in Pansu and Dubois, 2002, p. 16). According to Pansu and Dubois (2002, p. 19) while highly qualified candidates were generally judged positively, in the case of less qualified applicants facial attractiveness affected the interviewers judgements. However it was mainly observed in relational types of positions where beauty stereotype would lead to the stigmatisation of unattractive applicants that were judged less favourably. There is also evidence that counter to the 'beauty is good' stereotype. While this stereotype applies to attractive males, attractive females are evaluated less favourably in the interview, especially for jobs that traditionally require masculine characteristics (e.g. managerial positions). This is the 'beauty is beastly' effect. Attractive female applicants were perceived as more qualified and evaluated more favourably than unattractive women only when applying for neutral and sex- role congruent positions (Heilman and Saruwatari, 1977, cited in Shahani-Denning, p. 14).

### **2.3.3 Non-verbal cues**

The studies of Motowidlo and DeGroot (1999, pp. 986-992) and Burnett and Motowidlo (1998, p. 977) have shown that both the combined effects of specific visual cues and the combined effects of specific vocal cues significantly influence interviewers' judgements about applicants' suitability for employment in managerial positions and also impact personal reactions that people form about interviewees. The effects of visual and vocal cues on interviewers' judgements are linked to personal reactions, such as liking, trust, and attributed credibility, that interviewers might form about applicants. These affective reactions influence interviewers' judgements about applicants' suitability for employment. The authors agree with Greene and Mathieson (1989) that most of people have little control over their vocal cues that then can be treated as stable personal characteristics. Therefore, they concluded that as many non-verbal cues are consistent aspects of social presentation that people express in varied interpersonal situations; non-verbal cues presented in the employment interview can be similar to those displayed in the actual job. These findings are related especially to vocal cues. The authors suggested that it is important to consider the possibility that interviewers fall prey to biasing effects of non-verbal cues that actually have no relationship to managerial effectiveness. According to DeGroot and Gooty (2009, p. 180) even in structured interviews there are both rich verbal and non-verbal information available to the interviewer; while verbal information usually consists of right or wrong answers to the questions; non-verbal information is more open to interpretation. Non-verbal behaviours expressed intentionally by the candidate in order to impress the interviewer or these that are not job-related cause a distraction and biased interviewer judgement. On the other hand non-verbal cues that are naturally expressed by the candidate in the interview might enhance the complexity of the message sent by the candidate and supports answers to the questions because they carry information about the candidate's traits and personal characteristics (Burnett and Motowidlo, 1998, p. 963- 965). Non-verbal behaviours occur more spontaneously and are less intentionally controllable in the interview context; therefore they can be valued in demonstrating underlying personality traits (Peeters and Lievens, 2006, p. 217). Moreover, when the meaning of the non-verbal message conflicts with the meaning of the verbal message, people are more likely to believe the non-verbal information (Stanton, 2009, p.52). Also Riggio and Riggio (2002), DeGroot and Gooty (2009) agree that people's emotional expressiveness is encoded in their non-verbal behaviours and this is usually a valid indicator of persons' extraversion and emotional stability. The authors concluded that non-verbal cues are behavioural manifestations of underlying personality traits and they might actually be a source of validity. Interviewers should pay attention to the job-

related behaviours and information during the interview and recognise cues providing information that can result in the biased judgement (DeGroot and Gooty, 2009, p. 190). Also Burnett and Motowidlo (1998, p. 978) agree that instead of ignoring non-verbal behaviours, interviewers should be trained how to correctly decode and use the non-verbal information expressed by the applicants.

## **2.4 Social cognition and decision-making process**

### **2.4.1 Information processing theory**

Many of cognitive processes become mostly automatic as they are constantly practised. It means that they happen largely outside awareness, require few cognitive resources and are hard or sometimes impossible to control (Argyle and Colman, 1999, p. 48). The Lord and Maher (1993, pp. 13-16) information processing theory explains that people process information in a specific way in order to transfer information between short-term and long-term memories. There are two stages of information processing:

- Encoding (transferring and simplifying information from short-term-memory to long-term memory)
- Retrieval stage (recalling information from long-term memory and judgement/decision making)

As our short-term memory and our capacity to process information is limited, so people adopt cognitive strategies that simplify and organise incoming information into less complex structures in long-term memory (Aronson, 2012, p. 119). These simplified structures allow people to select, interpret, simplify and integrate incoming information and they consist of scripts, plans, categories, prototypes and heuristics. Subsequently people match incoming information with already-existing structures in a faster and more efficient way. One very useful knowledge structure in long-term memory is a group of organised categories of objects, people and situations. We categorise people in to particular categories e.g. category of leaders based on their similarity or dissimilarity to a prototype of a category member. For example a prototype of a leader is characterised as intelligent, goal oriented and responsible. Further when we label someone as extarvert we picture other traits that match with a prototype of typical extarvert such as being friendly, outgoing and sociable (Lord and Maher, 1993, pp. 13-16). These cognitive strategies may be efficient and helpful in processing complex world of information; however they can also lead to serious errors and biases (Aronson, 2012, p. 119).

Brunswik (cited in Akhuly and Gupta, 2014, p. 295) put an emphasis on the perception of the physical and social cues in judgement. These observable sources of information indicate those unobservable and intangible traits. According to DeGroot and Gooty (2009, p.180) all five personality dimensions mediate the non-verbal cues and the interview performance evaluation. They suggest that interviewers observe and interpret non-verbal cues displayed by the candidate and make attributions regarding that person's personality. As per social information processing theory (Lord and Maher, 1993) these perceptions are compared to a social prototype and the candidate is rated based on this comparison. The interviewer usually seeks out information that fits the prototype that is associated with a particular role and rates favourably these candidates that exhibit matching with this prototype behaviours.

According to Graves and Karren (1992, p. 332-335) there are considerable individual differences in interviewers' decision processes that might impede the consistency and effectiveness of decision strategies. Effective interviewers rely on the most job-relevant criteria, while less effective interviewers rely on all the criteria equally. In the Graves and Karren study, interpersonal and oral communication skills were more relevant to the job performance in customer service than work experience and education. Effective interviewers are also more aware of their own decision processes than those less effective. The authors highlight the importance of standardised formats of interviews and assessment against specific job-related criteria in order to enhance consistency. Akhuly and Gupta (2014) investigated the decision-making process in the competency-based interviews for the HR professionals. The authors agree with other scholars e.g. Graves and Karren (1992), Groves (2005), Barrick and Mount (1991), and Salgado (1997) that competencies such as personality and attitudes, values and enthusiasms matter more than cognitive performance and education, and this results can be extended also to managers and leaders. According to Deepa and Seth (2013, p. 7) soft skills such as communication and interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, team and negotiation skills, time and stress management are crucial in the current workplace. Soft skills are attitudes and behaviours are strongly related to our personality and are displayed in interactions with others.

#### **2.4.2 Biases and heuristics**

People are extremely sensitive to others' non-verbal behaviour. Facial expressions, body movement, and tone of voice guide inferences about the emotions, intentions, attitudes, and personality traits of others (Baron-Cohen, 1995, cited in Weisbuch and Ambady, 2009, p., 1104; Ambady and Rosenthal, 1992). These inferences can be made intentionally or

unintentionally, and in most cases, non-verbal inferences can be made extremely quickly. Personality, sexuality or liking can be all extracted from several seconds of non-verbal behaviour. In addition, non-verbal behaviours directed at a target person can influence the target's own behaviour (Ambady, 2000, cited in Weisbuch and Ambady, 2009, p., 1104).

As mental shortcuts, people invoke cognitive heuristics, simple decision rules that arise from conventional beliefs and expectations. These mental shortcuts may yield biased information processing and faulty judgements of others' veracity (Fiedler, 1993, cited in Burgoon *et al.*, p. 573). Anderson and Shackleton (1995, cited in Gunningle *et al.*, 2011, p. 127) have classified some of the most common errors and biases during interviews such as:

✓ **Expectancy effect**

Interviewers can form either positive or negative impressions of a candidate based on e.g. application form and this tends to have an impact on all subsequent decisions. This is sometimes termed as “gut instinct” or “snap decision”.

✓ **Information seeking bias (confirmation bias)**

People favour information that supports their social stereotype, attitudes and self-serving conclusions (Jonas *et al.*, 2001, p. 557). Based on their initial expectations, interviewers can actively seek information that will confirm these initial expectations and ignore information that argues against it. Oswald and Grosjean (cited in Pohl 2004, p. 79) define confirmation bias as searching for, interpreting and remembering information in such a way that systematically hinder the possibility that the assumption could be rejected.

✓ **Primacy effect**

Interviewers may form impressions about a candidate's personality within the first five minutes of the interview and tend to be influenced by it later on.

✓ **Stereotyping**

It is “generalising characteristics, motives, or behaviours to an entire group of people” (Aronson, 2012, p. 437). This categorisation guides our expectations. Once we categorise a person or an event, we expect this person to behave in a particular way e.g. in a job. Subsequently, we may treat people in a manner that makes them confirm our expectations. This process is called self-fulfilling prophecy (Aronson, 2012, p. 141-142).

✓ **Horns/halo effect**

Based on information received an interviewer may rate a candidate either generally favourably or generally unfavourably. However, negative information tends to be more influential than positive information, and thus, even where there is a balance between positive and negative information, the overall impression will tend to be negative.

✓ **Contrast and quota effect**

Interviewer decisions can be inherently affected by decisions made about earlier candidates, and pre-set selection quotas. Thus, those interviewed later are compared with those interviewed earlier, rather than being assessed against pre-determined criteria.

### **2.4.3 First impression in the employment interview**

Scholars are recently interested in expectancy confirmation behaviours and other errors in judgement during the interview. According to Judge et al. (2000, p. 391) pre-interview information about the candidate can often enhance the validity of the interview. The interviewer gathers pre-interview information from additional sources (e.g. application, resume, test scores or references) that impact the post-interview evaluations. Nevertheless, the validity of the interview decreases when pre-interview perceptions bias the conduct of the interview and interviewer's cognitive processes. Dipboye (1982, 1992, cited in Dougherty *et al.*, 1994, p. 659) presented a model of self-fulfilling prophecy in the employment interview which explains that cognitive and behavioural biases mediate the effects of pre-interview impressions on candidate's evaluation. Interviewers may behave in a way that confirms first impressions and leads to post-interview decisions that are positively related to pre-interview evaluations (Macan and Dipboye, 1990, cited in Dougherty *et al.*, 1994, p. 659). Based on initial evaluations interviewers may display positive or negative behaviours towards candidates during the interview e.g. positive style of interviewing, selling the company, providing job information to applicants, seeking less information from applicants, and building more rapport with the candidate. Candidates may then respond in a consistent way with the interviewers' positive or negative behaviour. Cognitive biases also occur when interviewers distort information to support first impressions, using selective attention and recall of information (Dougherty *et al.*, 1994, p. 663). Barrick *et al.* (2011, p. 332) argued, that described by Judge et al. (2000) and Dipboye (1992) pre-interview impressions vary from the impressions developed during face-to-face interactions with the candidate. Pre-interview information from additional sources such as candidate's resume is mainly job-related.

Many scholars are trying to find out whether people are able to make an accurate judgments about others based on their first impressions. In the study of Mast *et al.* (2011) the authors investigated the accuracy in assessing applicants' personality and deception detection by the recruiters and laypersons. Recruiters were better than laypersons in assessing personality profile; however laypersons were better in assessing personality dimensions separately. Laypersons were able to assess accurately openness, extraversion and conscientiousness, while recruiters were able to correctly judge only openness. The Barrick *et al.* (2000) findings differ from the Mast *et al.* (2011) results and indicate accurate assessment of candidates' extraversion, openness and agreeableness. Barrick *et al.* (2000) and Mast *et al.* (2011) state that conscientiousness that cannot be accurately assessed by the recruiters, even though conscientiousness is a valid predictor of the job performance. The Most *et al.* (2011, p. 206) concluded that recruiters are better at assessing the candidates as a whole using many sources of information. In addition, they are able to detect lies in job applicants, by paying attention to the non-verbal cues that are more diagnostic in lie detection than verbal communication.

Barrick *et al.* (2011, p. 345) suggest that job-related attributes such as extraversion and verbal skills can be meaningfully assessed within the first few minutes of the interview. First impression impacts the interviewer in the categorisation stage of Dipboye's (2005, cited in, Barrick *et al.*, 2011, p. 345) decision framework. The authors put an emphasis on the rapport building stage when initial impression is usually developed. Rapport building in the interview is establishing relationship with the candidate at the beginning of the interview in order to make them feel comfortable (Lawton, 2006, p. 34). While individual interviews give the greatest chance of establishing rapport and developing mutual trust, panel interviews provide little prospect of rapport building and developing discussion (Torrington *et al.*, 2008, p. 235-236). However, even in structured interviews most interviewers build rapport with the candidate at the beginning of their meeting, despite the researcher recommendation to avoid this (Chapman and Zweig, 2005, cited in Barrick *et al.*, 2011, p. 331). Barrick *et al.* (2011, p. 331) suggest that initial impressions developed during rapport building may be critical in the interviewer's decision-making.

#### **2.4.4 Impression management**

In the world of business, the first impression can be the difference between the success and failure, therefore many applicants try to manage their impressions using varies tactics (Lawton, 2006, p. 4-5). Impression management in the interview is defined as attempting to control other people's impressions regarding one's personality. Impression management has an impact on

hiring decisions, even in highly structured interviews (Kleinmann and Klehe, 2011, p. 29). Job interview is a specific situation where active self-presentation is expected from the applicant (Barron and Sackett, 2008; Campell and Roberts, 2007, cited in Paulhus *et al.*, 2013, p. 2054; Ellis *et al.*, 2002, cited in Kleinmann and Klehe, 2011, p. 29). However, some impression management tactics required in the interview, however others may be also a source of bias. While impression management tactics such as self-praise and ingratiation are helpful in the job interview, exaggeration of one's credentials is no direct benefits (Paulhus *et al.*, 2013, p. 2055). In the Peeters and Lievens (2006, p. 217) study, applicants used more proactive, assertive self-focused verbal tactics in order to achieving a favourable impression. Also the Kleinmann and Klehe (2011) finding indicate that most applicants use more assertive impression management techniques rather than defensive tactics such as: excuses and justifications. An interesting finding was that the applicants did not use any non-verbal tactics which indicates that non-verbal behaviours occur more spontaneously and are less intentionally controllable in the interview context.

It is interesting that some candidates, who do not perform well in the objective performance test before the interview, can succeed in the actual interview due to their self-presentation skills (Paulhus *et al.*, 2013, p. 2053). Interviewers need to be aware that applicants differ not only in competence but also in self-presentation style. Self-presentation style can be very influential especially as it usually operates without awareness of the candidate and the interviewer.

According to Burnett and Motowidlo (1998, p. 978) interviewers are trained to ignore or discount applicants' non-verbal cues due to the fact that they can be manipulated during the interview. The authors suggest that instead interviewers should be trained how to correctly decode and use the non-verbal information expressed by the applicants. Non-verbal behaviours occur more spontaneously and are less intentionally controllable in the interview context; therefore they can be valued in demonstrating underlying personality traits (Peeters and Lievens, 2006, p. 217).

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The chapter outlined the theoretical framework of the dissertation topic. The presented literature review highlighted a disparity of views among scholars around the influence of candidate's non-verbal communication on the interviewer's evaluation in the employment interview. It also emphasised the importance of improving the interview validity by modifying its type and structure. Later in this paper, the author will discuss the secondary data with the

primary research findings. The following chapter will present methodology adapted in order to respond to the research objectives.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter methodology used in conducting the research is presented together with the rationale for using the adopted research approach. The choice of research tools and the process of data collection are outlined, followed by a discussion of the research methodology limitations. Finally, in this chapter a number of ethical issues are presented.

### 3.2 Research philosophy

When taking into consideration the research objectives and the nature of the research the author viewed the two major fields of Epistemology and Ontology. The author feels that Epistemology best fits the topic of the dissertation. According to Saunders et al. (2012, p. 132) Epistemology concerns what constitutes acceptable knowledge in the field of study. The author considered the three possible research philosophies such as: positivism, critical realism and interpretivism within the field of Epistemology.

When research reflects the philosophy of positivism the researcher collects data about an observable reality and searches for regularities and causal relationships in data to create law-like generalisations like those produced by scientists. This type of research is undertaken, as far as possible, in a value-free way (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 134). Considering characteristics of the philosophy of positivism the author realised that the value free perspective in the proposed research is not possible. The author agrees that the social world of business and management is far too complex to be explained by definite laws in the same way as the physical sciences. Therefore, Interpretivism philosophy is used in the research. The author needs to consider differences between humans in their role as social actors, and also is part of what is observed.

The author also visited the philosophy of realism and more closely the aspect of critical realism that in the author's opinion fits best the topic of the dissertation. Critical realists argue that what we experience are sensations, the images of the things in the real world, not the things directly (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 136). The author agrees with critical realists and recognises the importance of multilevel studies (e.g. at the level of the individual, the group and the organisation). Each of these levels has the capacity to change the researcher's understanding of what is being studied (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 137).

### **3.3 Research Approach**

Having considered both deductive and inductive approaches to research the author feels that an inductive approach is the most relevant to the topic of the dissertation. The purpose of this research was to understand better the nature of the problem and make sense of the interview data collected through interviews. Using an induction approach, the researcher is producing a theory from the gathered data and learns about the research topic as the dissertation progresses. The theory would follow data rather than vice versa, as with deduction. The deduction approach has its origins in research in the natural sciences and it involves the development of a theory that is then subjected to rigorous tests through a series of propositions (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 146). The author conducted six in-depth interviews, then analysed the collected data and formed a conclusion. The research topic involves mainly human behaviour, opinions and feelings; and the results of this research will unlikely be deductive. The purpose of the research was to investigate how non-verbal communication in the interview is perceived by the hiring managers in order to draw more general conclusions out of this investigation. Thus, the conclusions drawn from findings provide only an interpretation of the results regarding the particular case study rather than factual data. However, Blaikie et al. (2007, cited in Ritchie, 2013, p. 6) argue that “there is no such thing as pure induction or pure deduction”. The authors suggest that although inductive researches generate and interpret their data without testing a hypothesis, the data they generate, the questions they ask and the analytical categories they use are usually influenced by assumptions deductively drawn from previous work in the field. This can be applied to some extent in the present research where the literature review has influenced the author’s research process.

### **3.4 Research strategy**

The adapted research strategy- case study, “explores a research topic or phenomenon within the context or within a number of real-life contexts” (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 179). The choice of a case study was made due to the strength of this strategy in answering “how” ,”why”, ”what” questions and providing in depth understanding of the research problem (Yin, 2003, cited in Mkansi and Acheampong, 2012, p. 135). There are other principal strategies used with qualitative research such as: action research, ethnography, Grounded theory and narrative research; however the author chose a case study, as this research strategy enabled gaining a rich understanding of the context of the research and the processes being enacted (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007, cited in Saunders et al., 2012, p. 179).

### **3.5 Research choice**

There are two types of research: quantitative and qualitative, and they vary in terms of the kind of information used to study phenomenon. Quantitative research relies on quantitative information such as numbers and figures; while qualitative research is mainly based on qualitative data such as words, sentences and narratives (Blumberg et al., 2005, p. 124). Quantitative research “examines relationships between variables, which are measured numerically and analysed using a range of statistical techniques”. On the other hand, qualitative research “studies participants’ meanings and the relationships between them, using a variety of data collection techniques and analytical procedures, to develop a conceptual framework (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 162-163).

In order to gain the objectives of the research problem the author conducted both primary and secondary research and in doing so adopted a mono-method research in which one qualitative technique of data collection has been used. The choice of the qualitative approach was made due to a complex nature of the chosen topic. The aim of this qualitative research is to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Therefore the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). The final written report has a flexible structure.

The main objective of the research was to investigate views and opinions of the hiring managers around the dissertation problem in order to gain a better and deep understanding of the researched issue. The quantitative research would not allow the author to achieve this; therefore this type of research hasn't been used in this research process. In addition, time constraints and the limited access to the sample would not allow the researcher to achieve a right size of the researched population.

### **3.6 Time horizon**

The researcher proposes a cross-sectional snap shot in relation to the time horizon. The reason for this selection is the fact that most research projects undertaken for academic courses are necessarily time constrained (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 190). In addition, the research question being proposed can be answered by gathering and analysing data over a relatively short period of time. This research was conducted during a period of 12 weeks.

### **3.7 Data Collection**

Due to the explanatory purpose of the case study that aimed at investigating the role of candidate's non-verbal communication on the interviewer's evaluation during the interview process from the hiring managers' perspectives, the data were gathered through six semi-structured interviews with the hiring managers of the case study organisation.

The author used both secondary data and primary data collection in this research. The research methods are outlined below.

### **3.8 Secondary data collection**

A literature review is a process of identifying published and unpublished work from secondary data sources on the topic of interest and evaluating this work in relation to the research problem (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010, p. 38). The literature sources helped the researcher to develop a good understanding of, and insight into the research topic. In addition, qualitative data analysis was based on theories and models highlighted in the literature review. Previous research can be divided into three categories: primary, secondary and tertiary. In reality these categories often overlap. The different categories of literature resources represent the flow of information from the original source (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 82-83). The secondary research has been used by the author mainly in the formulation of the literature review and was obtained through Dublin Business School Library, and also from library electronic databases e.g. EBSCO, Emerald. The author will also use other sources available via the internet e.g. Scholar Google search.

### **3.9 Primary data collection**

There is a variety of data collection methods in qualitative research. The most popular are interviews, focus groups and observation. Having considered pros and cons of all data collection methods the researcher felt that face-to-face interviews are the most suitable and useful for this research. The aim of the focus group is to gather information from the participants through their discussion around specific issues. The researcher uses the group process to encourage open and interactive discussion and also controls this process (Ritchie et al., 2013, p. 222). Although this data collection method has many advantages, it would not be suitable for this research for many reasons. The nature of the case study organisation requires high confidentiality, also between the participants. The managers involved in this research put an emphasis on their anonymity throughout the process. In addition, the researcher felt that

group dynamics could negatively influence the participants' honesty and openness. Observation on the other hand would not be possible to arrange due to a few reasons. This method of collecting data requires a long period of time and is tedious and expansive (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010, p. 214). The researcher's availability is very limited and the timeframe of the dissertation project would not allow carrying out observation. In addition, the organisation's policies and regulations would not allow such a project.

In order to meet the research objectives the researcher chose face-to-face interviews as the primary data collection method. One typology that is commonly used divides interviews into three groups: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured (in-depth) interviews (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 374). The researcher conducted six semi-structured face-to-face interviews at the convenience of the interviewees and also in relative confidence. The first interview was of great value to the researcher as it was a test-interview. The feedback about the clarity of questions and the structure of the interview was provided by the participant and taken into consideration by the interviewer in the following interviews.

The researcher had a list of previously prepared questions for each participant related to the specific themes that were drawn out from the literature review and aimed to respond to the research objectives. However, as questions in semi-structured interviews vary to some extent from interview to interview (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 374), also in this research some of the questions and their order were changing depending on the flow of the conversation. Also, if there was a need, probing and follow-up questions were asked in order to gain a deeper understanding of respondents' views and opinions. From time to time the questions were rephrased in order to explain better what the researcher is trying to find out. Main questions covered all the major parts of the research problem, while follow-up questions asked for explanation of themes, concepts, or events that the interviewee has introduced. Probing questions helped manage the conversation by keeping it in the interviewer's field of interest and asking for examples or clarification (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p. 129). The interview questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

In the first test-interview the author realised that adding a few additional questions to the questionnaire will be beneficial for the research. On a couple of occasions, in order to avoid replication, the researcher left out some of the questions that have been previously discussed by the respondent in the interview. In order to gain a deep understanding of the hiring managers opinions the author left room for flexibility and additional questions. However, there was a list of basic questions used in every single interview in order to simplify the data analysis and

enable some comparison. The interviews were conducted in the case study organisation in July 2015 and took approximately 60 minutes each. The data have been captured by audio-recording the conversation.

### **3.10 Sampling**

The author conducted six semi-structured face-to-face interviews with five hiring managers and one HR manager. The case study organisation is a public sector Irish organisation that aims to encourage investment into Ireland by foreign-owned companies. Due to the new government investment programme, the recruitment process within the organisation has been recently intensive. Extra staff has been hired to help identify new sectors and business opportunities. Therefore, the hiring managers' experience was of great benefit to the researcher. Also, the choice of this organisation for the case study was motivated by the researcher's access to the sample. The researcher has previously worked for the company and had the possibility to access the hiring managers.

The researcher was not able to conduct more than six interviews due to the restricted timeframe for data analysis and limited availability of the hiring managers within the organisation. Considering the qualitative approach used in this research, the author feels that this relatively small sample enables providing data that meet the research problem and objectives. All the participants were male so it can be perceived there is not enough differentiation in the sample. Some may argue that the female perception may vary from the male perception of the research problem. However, most of the hiring managers of the case study organisation are male and coincidentally only male managers offered their participation in this research.

### **3.11 Ethical issues**

Qualitative research is interpretative research where the researcher is typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants. This introduces a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues into the qualitative research process (Locke, Spirduso & Silverman, 2013, cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 187). There are two ethical issues in particular that need to be taken into consideration in this research process. It is important not to breach the privacy of participants and confidentiality of the provided information. The case study organisation is highly reputed with the norms and policies that require confidentiality. Therefore, the names of the organisation and the participant remain confidential in this research. The author also needs to remain impartial throughout the research process as much as possible.

### **3.12 Limitations to the research**

A great advantage of the qualitative research is the depth of information and detail that can be gained; however, there are also several limitations to the research. The research was conducted in only one company with a specific profile of recruited employees. The research results might not be relevant to different types of companies. However, the purpose of qualitative research is to develop a deep understanding of proposed research problem, rather than generalisation.

Additionally, because it is not possible to automate qualitative-data collection as effectively as you can automate quantitative-data collection, it is usually extremely time consuming and expensive to gather large amounts of data, as would be typical for quantitative research studies. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews, therefore there was room for additional questions. It enabled the researcher gaining an in-depth understanding of the participants' views and opinions; however it also made data analysis a difficult and time consuming task.

It is common to perform qualitative research with only 5-10 participants, while for quantitative research; it's common for there to be hundreds or even thousands of participants. As a result, qualitative research tends to have less statistical power than quantitative research when it comes to discovering and verifying trends.

The research interview is an interaction between two people and this interaction can provoke anxiety and evoke a defensive mechanism in the interviewee and in the interviewer (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015, p. 35); therefore the researcher aimed to create a positive atmosphere during the meetings, explained the research topic at the beginning of the interview and asked for feedback on questions at the end of the meetings. Due to the qualitative nature of the research, self-reported data and the researcher interpretation of such data contain several potential sources of bias. There are many points where the interviewer's control of the process can affect the quality of the data such as: inappropriate influencing behaviour, or biases related to interviewer's perception and judgement of the participants' responses or participants themselves. According to Blumberg et al. (2005, p. 256) participant-initiated error could also occur in the interviewing process. This error happen when the participant fails to answer fully and accurately - either by choice or due to incomplete knowledge. In addition, some of the interviewed hiring managers could have difficulties to answer fully some of the questions that were sensitive or involved ego matter. The author also realises the potential limitation of the information provided by the interviewed mangers due to confidentiality policies.

There were some disadvantages to the organisational side of the meetings. Due to limited participants' availability it was quite difficult to arrange research interviews. Some of them had to be rescheduled a couple of times. Another disadvantage was the cost associated with travel to Dublin that included transport costs and annual leave days taken from researcher's full-time job. The length of time given for completion of the research is limited, and together with the author's full-time work and other commitments it might have limited the research process to some extent.

## Chapter 4: Primary research

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the findings of the primary research are presented and analysed. The findings will be directly correlated with the research objectives in order to enable further analysis and respond to the research problem.

### 4.2 Interviewee's profile and identification code

In order to respond to the research problem and objectives, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five hiring managers and one HR programme manager. All participants are involved in the internal and external recruitment and selection process within the case study organisation for many years. All participants were male. Due to the nature of the organisation anonymity of the participants has been assured and will prevail in dealing with the gathered data. Identification codes were created in order to ensure confidentiality. The code is made up of the initials of the name of the division the participants work in and the numbers from 1 to 6 as per the order of the interviews conducted.

**Table 4: Interviewees' identification codes**

Identification code	Position
HR1	HR Programme Manager
CCBS2	Senior Vice President
LS3	Department Manager
FS4	Department Manager
FS5	Department Manager
CCBS6	Project Manager

### 4.3 Presentation of the findings

In order to respond to the research problem the findings were structured into four sections that correspond to the research objectives.

### **4.3.1 Objective 1: Determining the validity of the employment interview as a selection tool**

The first set of questions was designed in order to respond to the first research objective and determine the validity of the employment interview. In order to meet the first objective the following issues have been investigated during the interviews:

- ✓ The type and structure of the interviews conducted within the case study organisation.
- ✓ Respondents' views on the effectiveness of the interview and other selection tools in predicting job performance.
- ✓ Reasons for the employment interview popularity.
- ✓ Disadvantages of an interview as a selection tool.
- ✓ Candidates' personality and non-verbal communication as job criteria.

- **The type and structure of the interviews in the case study organisation**

All participants agreed that the interviews have a medium to low level of structure and are mainly competency-based. There are nine competencies being assessed and their levels vary depending on the position. They characterised the interviews as being semi-structured.

LS3 distinguished the competencies:

*“For business development and marketing people, we have competencies such as: sales and marketing, networking, communication and personal effectiveness, negotiation skills, knowledge of the organisation, leadership and project management skills, team skills and innovation.”*

CCBS2 made a distinction between two separated recruitment and selection processes within the organisation:

*“There are two recruitment processes here: internal driven by Unions' requirements and external. In the internal process, interviews are structured, competency-based and very consistent with internal obligations to the Unions. Interviews for external candidates are competency-based as a framework, but they tend to be free flowing. External candidates are not Unions' employees so we can be more flexible”.*

FS5 further described interviews conducted in the organisation as panel interviews that take 45-60 minutes and include:

*“...a HR person, hiring manager from the division of the role, and a neutral manager from a different division, that is not much involved in the decision making, but can contribute”.*

CCBS6 commented on the structure of the interviews:

*“We sit beforehand and divide between us the areas and competencies to cover... We are trying to have the consistency, but if you want to ask random questions, you can. We have a choice regarding questions”.*

CCBS2 added:

*“There are informal elements of the interview to get the organisational fit and personality of the candidate”.*

➤ **Respondents’ views on the effectiveness of the interview and other selection tools in predicting job performance**

The participants were asked to express their opinions about an interview as a selection tool. The researcher aimed to find out whether interviews conducted within the case study organisation are effective in predicting job performance. Most participants see the selection process as quite effective based on the number of successful hires. Some of their answers are presented below:

HR1 commented:

*“Selection process is an inexact science, it can go wrong. The selection methods we have here are the best we can have at the moment. Interview on its own is not the best predictor of future performance. We also need a comprehensive reference check. I think the competency-based interview is effective as it is seeking evidence and probing the examples, not just a statement that somebody is good at something. Interviews are based on previously agreed requirements for the role; therefore the organisation needs to understand what requirements are right for the specific roles, the questions and probes around these requirements.”*

Also FS4 agreed that an interview is a good predictor of the job performance. He said:

*“Yes, we have good people here. Good steps of the selection process that include 2-3 interview stages. Panel interviews are more effective. It is always good to get other people’s view. You hire for the organisation, not only for the particular division. There is always an exception, but overall it works pretty well”.*

CCBS2 stated:

*“We challenge external candidates during the interview; we test their responses to the environment. The interview process might be quite difficult but then is more effective. We always clarify the rationale for the interview style to avoid candidate’s negative impressions and they are happy with it.”*

He explained further:

*“Competencies enable objective scoring, especially where there is a little difference between the candidates’ abilities to do the job”.*

CCBS6 had a different opinion from his colleagues regarding the effectiveness of the interview as a selection tool:

*“Some of the candidates didn’t work out; their contracts were not renewed after the probation period or had been cut short. I think they account to 40% of the external hires”.*

All participants see panel interviews as more effective than individual interviews:

LS3 said:

*“Panel interviews are difficult as there are 2-3 people with different views and angles. It is good to have an alternative voice on the panel; somebody who is independent, neutral, not involved in the role. If that independent voice is strong enough the panel interview will work effectively”.*

Participant LS3 also suggested that a different approach to the selection process could be considered. He put an emphasis on more informal interaction with the candidates in order to assess the personality and the organisational fit. He said:

*“Why not take them in and shorten the formal process. They are on the 6 month probation period anyway. If the CV is good let’s bring the person in for a couple of days, let him wonder and meet people, and see if he is ready to start. We can get together later and chat for a half an hour about the impression the person made”.*

Most of participants stated that they remember only a couple of situation where the misjudgement regarding an applicant was made during the interview that resulted in a poor performance in the actual job.

CCBS2 commented:

*“This is an exception rather than a rule. I can think about 2-3 situations like that in past 13 years. The candidates performed well in the interview, but then when they faced real challenges on the job, they floundered. When we put them under pressure in the interview we cannot fully replicate the real challenges. Some of the candidates were not truthful during the interview and you won’t find out until later. Sometimes it takes 6 months before you realise that someone is a wrong fit.”*

LS3 replied:

*“The candidate answered the questions the way we wanted them to be answered but then a level of his energy was lower in the job that we’ve expected. We had to let this person go again. He was not authentic in the interview. He managed to present himself”.*

HR1 added:

*“There was one candidate...There were some indications that his interpersonal skills were not as good as we would like them to be, but his track record of business development showed that they must have been good. We thought that maybe he does not handle the interview situation well, so we hired him. The person is performing ok, not great now. I also remember a situation from my previous job, where I hired a person who was very good in the interview: polite, giving right answers, showing good working history and with a positive reference check. We found out later that he was a thief, well-known to the Social Welfare. If somebody wants to hide something and try hard enough, they probably will”.*

Beside interviews, there are also other selection tools used in the organisation. The participants listed: assessment centres as a screening tool for a high volume intake, profiling- psychometric tests, presentation in a format of a proposal linked to the organisation strategy, and the role playing exercise in the interview. Interviews are the most frequently used selection tool in the case study organisation. Participants were asked to state their opinion about using a variety of tools in the selection process.

HR1 said:

*“For senior levels we have a variety of tools. Variety of tools is good as long as the managers are trained in understanding these tools and putting them all together. The danger is that it can fall apart if they don’t know how to use these tools. There can also be a subconscious bias. Someone who after the psychometric test came across as directive can be ruled out because of*

*that. Here, the hiring managers are not trained in using a variety of tools, only the senior executive team is”.*

Also CCBS6 agreed:

*“More variety of tools and engagement with the candidate are better. I would like to see more tools and interviews”.*

LS3 had a mixed opinion on the effectiveness of using a variety of tools:

*“On the one hand bigger variety should give a better feel of people, their fit and abilities. Longer selection process takes to be completed, sometimes up to 6 months, and the candidate is still in, it also shows their commitment and indicates that they will take the job. However, on the other hand it is a lottery. Sometimes, when you take someone based only on the interview, it might work as well”.*

FS4 and FS5 expressed that using only interview as a selection tool is sufficient.

FS4 said:

*“I prefer face-to-face interview and reference check. I believe they are the strongest. Other tools can be used only for screening with a high-volume purpose”.*

➤ **Reasons for the employment interview popularity**

All the participants agreed that the interview is crucial for the final selection, especially in assessing the organisational fit.

HR1 commented:

*“You can’t beat a face-to-face interview. It is necessary to create a relationship with the candidate. It’s a two-way communication. The interviewers can outline what the organisation can do for the successful applicant, its commitment to the employee, not only what the applicant can do for them. It is also important to build mutual trust”.*

CCBS2 highlighted the importance of the nature of jobs:

*“Most people we hire will be engaging with clients in a face-to-face interaction. To a certain extent we can get a sense of their style in a face-to-face interview. We set up a role-play during interviews, where the candidate is our employee and the interviewer is a client. We assess candidate’s communication style, whether they are aggressive, pleasant, how do they react to*

*the client questions, and if they build trust. We are looking for non-verbal as much as verbal aspects of communication”.*

FS4 had a similar point of view:

*“We are in sales and marketing...Person’s personality and posture that comes across in the interview might be replicated in the client situation. Interview is a human-human interaction, a richer conversation, therefore a richer evaluation of the candidate”.*

FS5 added:

*“It is hard to think about an alternative. Interviews are the best for the final selection. You can’t assess personality and fit without seeing the candidate. You can check a degree of chemistry as you will work with this person. We are in a consulting type of business...It is an influencing game where soft skills, communication skills matter as much as hard skills”.*

LS3 suggested a different reason for interview popularity. He said:

*“In some way people who got to a senior level in the organisation like to feel they have chosen an employee. It is a big part of that. There is a status of doing that, that ‘I am responsible for hiring’”.*

#### ➤ **Interview disadvantages**

The participants highlighted a few disadvantages of a competency-based interview and interviews in general. Most of the participants express that focusing only on the competencies required for the role will not allow getting a full picture of an applicant. They put an emphasis on the informal elements of the interview that should be included in the process in order to achieve this.

LS3 said:

*“There is not enough time to discuss a broader view of the candidate. For me hobbies can sometimes tell more about the person than CV”.*

In addition, CCBS2 said:

*“You are limited to certain competencies... there is not enough room for scenario-type of questions around the challenging situations. The structure has some benefits, especially considering a short period of time allocated for each interview”.*

HR1 also expressed:

*“If the process is too rigid, there is no space for relationship building with the candidate...There is a danger when the organisation does not properly understand the competencies required for the role”.*

CCBS6 highlighted that sometimes the panel can be dysfunctional due to a lack of consistency regarding job requirements between panel members, and also a lack of preparation before the interview. He also added that the interview is a once off event and the candidates can be overanxious on that day, which can impact their performance.

➤ **Candidate’s personality and non-verbal communication as a job criteria**

The participants were asked whether personality and non-verbal communication are included in the job criteria. All participants agreed that personality and non-verbal communication are not included in written job criteria; however they all consider them while assessing the candidates.

CCBS2 said:

*“It is vitally important for sales and marketing roles as they need to build a connection with perspective clients. If their body language is defensive, they pose too much, they can come across that we can’t trust them. They need to know those tricks as sale people. They need to be conscious of their body language”.*

HR1 stated:

*“Personality without formally stating it in the job criteria form is important for any job, especially in here. I would never take non-verbal issue in isolation. You need to ask more questions. There is a danger when interviewers subconsciously or consciously make a decision in their minds about the person, based on some non-verbal aspect and they will only go and seek evidence that the candidate is this way. The best guy I’ve hired never looked into my eyes in the interview. But he was hired for an IT role, where social skills weren’t required as much as here”.*

The participants also stated that the aspects they consider in the interview include: the candidate’s confidence, impression made, communication (verbal and non-verbal), the way applicants engage with the panel members, their energy level, the way they dress, style of their body language, and the way they speak.

### 4.3.2 Objective 2: Identifying non-verbal behaviours that predict job performance

In order to respond to the second objective, the researcher assessed the participants' knowledge about non-verbal communication and its classification. All the participants had good understanding of the asked subject and were able to give many examples of non-verbal behaviours. The taxonomy of non-verbal cues was shown to the participants by the researcher in order to support further questions. This taxonomy is presented in the literature review in Table 3.

#### ➤ Non-verbal cues observed in the interview

The participants were asked what applicant non-verbal cues they observe during the interview. Most participants evaluate candidates' engagement during the interview that can be expressed by both non-verbal and verbal behaviours.

HR1 commented:

*"I like to see engagement, that the person is looking at me and engage with all the members of the panel. I like when they keep eye contact and mirror what is being given. These are the most important to me. What I don't like is when they are slouched in the chair and overly relaxed. I want them to be comfortable but not over relaxed. I also don't like defensiveness. It is always a combination of verbal and non-verbal. I wouldn't take in into account only based on body language. I would if it is backed up by verbal answers".*

CCBS2 added:

*"People need to have natural style, come across as credible, not anxious. People need to show through non-verbal communication that they can build connection...acknowledge things by nodding and mirroring behaviours".*

The participants mentioned other non-verbal behaviours that they observe during the interview:

LS3 said:

*"Facial expression gives you a view what is going on in someone's head. The way people react shows first on their face before anywhere else. Facial expression gives you a view how genuine the person is. I also look at tension and nervousness: how they sit, how they use their hands, breathing. People don't breath. There is a lot to say out and the sentences just disappear".*

CCBS6 added:

*“I am looking at things like: their awareness of habits they might have such as: talking to the chest, looking up and down and not listening to the questions, sitting back, being laid back, biting their nails, rubbing their nose a lot”.*

➤ **Non-verbal cues required for the sales and marketing roles**

Participants were asked whether there are non-verbal behaviours required from the successful candidate for sales and marketing roles. Non-verbal behaviours and physical appearance are not included in the formal job criteria, however all participants assess them in the interview.

For most participants candidate’s dress code and physical appearance is also important in the interview.

LS3 said:

*“We are a professional organisation and the way they look is very important”.*

CCBS2 explained:

*“I like to see interviews as a proxy for the sales meetings. I’d like to see they engage with me as they would engage with a prospective client, if their body language is open and they keep eye contact... Dress code is very important. There are multimillion dollar investments so they need to make sure they appear quite serious, but also engaging with clients”.*

LS3 also commented on the importance of the applicant attire:

*“They need to dress properly for the interview to show respect, polished shoes, and tie. That creates an impression straight away. If this is the reaction I get in the interview, is it likely to be the reaction our future client is going to get”.*

FS5 added:

*“I wouldn’t over worry about clothing. Normal business attire is expected. Physical appearance can work against; also not engaging during conversation would impact performance, without being formally scored”.*

CCBS6 was able to provide a few examples from his experience that demonstrate the importance of the candidate physical appearance and attire in the interview:

*There was one candidate with stylish blond hair and blue fringe. The hairstyle was definitely unusual...She had a great experience. I don’t think she did a good interview. When she left the*

*rest of the panel said she looked weird. Blue hair is not enough to me to not hire her, but it was to others. Physical attractiveness has a strong influence in the interview.... I did not reject the girl because of her blue fringe, but I understand where other colleagues come from. It is a professional environment, conservative, government employees”.*

He also provided a different example:

*“There was a candidate with thick glasses and problems with walking. I know he was not hired because of that. I would look beyond that, but I have colleagues who don’t”.*

CCBS6 also added:

*“Sociable and attractive people will benefit more in the team. When someone is not attractive but sociable, their look does not really matter that much then”.*

The participants also distinguished other non-verbal cues that are considered during the interview however they would weight them differently. The participants mentioned the following non-verbal cues: facial expression, hands movement, handshake, body tension, posture, personal space, body odour, excessive sweating, smile, moving a chair towards the panel members, voice pitch frequency.

In addition, some participants mentioned the candidate’s non-verbal behaviours assessed in role playing exercise used during the interview. The candidates are put under pressure like they would face in a client situation and are asked challenging questions.

FS4 explained:

*“We observe how people react to very difficult questions. Some are very good at presenting themselves that you don’t see how under pressure they are. When you push people some get confrontational and snappy”.*

FS5 added:

*“It is not good when somebody has difficulties to communicate, that think twice about what to say, or these touchy, feely people that are at your face. Also violent hand movement can be distracting. However, I wouldn’t over worry about that”.*

CCBS6 mentioned that some candidate practice particular behaviours in order to make a better impression:

*“They move their chair to face whoever is asking the question... move the chair to the end of the table to sit beside the panel. You can see they practice them, they have read about them. That’s ok if you are using these, but I actually look if they engage me, if it benefits them to move that chair beside the table”.*

#### **4.3.3 Objective 3: Determining a relationship between non-verbal communication and personality traits**

In order to respond to this objective the researcher asked whether the participants associate candidate’s non-verbal behaviours with personality traits.

HR1, CCBS2, LS3 and CCBS6 expressed that non-verbal behaviours and physical appearance can express the candidate personality traits during the interview.

HR1 said

*“They can be good indicators but depends on whether you have trained interviewers that they won’t make biased judgement based on that”.*

CCBS2 commented:

*“Definitely! People who don’t make eye contact: you ask yourself why? Is it because they don’t believe what they are saying, or because they are shy? It is not that I know exactly what personality trait it is showing, but sometimes the fact that I don’t know is worse. For example folded arms and guarded posture might indicate they are defensive. Every time when you ask questions and the person has a pause ‘ah...’ for a long period of time, it means they are thinking about the answer instead of knowing it straight away”.*

LS3 highlighted the importance of candidate’s stress in the interview that might affect the candidate’s behaviour:

*“Yes, for some people who are very natural, those who behave in the interview the way they would in day-today life. Others change completely for an interview process due to stress and worries. That big occasion makes you someone you are not...These people who come across as natural perform better in the interview”.*

FS5 expressed:

*“The candidates are on their best behaviour in the interview. Formal nature of the interview will leave a bit that mystery what the person is like. What we know is if they do good interviews or not...When I have a chance I always ask them about their personal interests. If they can*

*explain their interests with passion, I will be more confident that they can sell FDI. Subject does not really matter but the way they communicate”.*

The researcher asked a couple of questions regarding two particular personality traits such as extraversion and conscientiousness to find out the following: what way people with these traits would behave in the interview, whether the participants consider these traits while evaluating, and whether these personality traits can impact job performance. Extraverts were described as animated, talkative and more positive regarding their past experience. They smile more often, gesticulate more than introverts, and come out with the answers straight away. Their answers are longer and more detailed. In hiring managers’ opinion introverts usually answer exactly what the interviewer has asked about and they don’t over emphasise their achievements. Usually the interviewers need to ask them follow-up questions. Introverts also were described as quiet and shy.

CCBS6 and FS5 stated that they are not looking for only extraverts or introverts, but for people who are balanced. However, they expressed that extreme introverts would not fit in the organisation.

FS5 explained:

*“It is a very balanced type of job: desk work, people work, entertainment and diplomacy. You need balance. They should be able to command the room of 4-5 people, sell Ireland. They need enough confidence to do so. Extreme extravert wants to be a star, dominate, and we need to engage with the client, listen to the client and process it in a way”.*

LS3 and CCBS2 expressed that depends on the type of job within the organisation both introverts and extroverts can perform well. CCBS2 commented:

*“You can argue that in sales we hire only extraverts as they are more sociable. We have very good introvert type of characters too. They are more tactical and considered in their approach. They are not less effective than extroverts, but only have a different style with a client. It really depends on sale. Introverts can work as solution partners in a high value - low volume sale, with decision-making process lasting over 2 years. The clients have to trust you then. Extroverts would work better in a high volume - low value sale, where they almost have to be at the client’s face. The clients need to like them”.*

LS3 added:

*“A lot of people you need are extraverts here for calls and meetings. For legal, accounts department, and strategy you need more introvert people that they can take the job and complete the task”.*

HR1 and FS4 expressed that there is a need for more extravert people in the organisation due to the nature of the roles.

HR1 said:

*“For this organisation extroverts are best for sales and marketing positions. They need to build rapport with senior executives and clients to get jobs for Ireland. However he added:*

*“You can be introvert by nature and love your time alone, but copes very well in the extraverts’ world”.*

Also LS3 agreed:

*“You can train yourself without being extravert to do the job, like an actor”.*

FS4 added:

*“I am leaning towards extravert people that are more confident without being cocky. The fact that somebody is very quiet and I need to drag the information out of in the interview will impact my evaluation or if they don’t contribute and I need to ask 12 instead of 6 questions”.*

HR1, CCBS2 and CCBS6 agreed that there are non-verbal behaviours that might indicate somebody’s conscientiousness. Below are some of their examples:

HR1 said:

*“People with high conscientiousness will not interrupt, and if they do, they apologise. They put into the bin the empty cup when they finish their water after the interview”.*

CCBS2 added:

*“There are lots of indicators: the way they present themselves, their dress code, if they listen to the questions and hear the questions, eye contact, the person’s ability to overcome nerves, they are conscious of their body language and how they connect. We expect high conscientiousness from the candidates”.*

CCBS6 commented:

*“They listen to the questions, have structured answers, the amount of time they take to think about the answers, while answering they go to the specific details, don’t answer on the general level”.*

LS3 and FS4 expressed that a level of conscientiousness would be considered in the interview, however they put more emphasis on the candidate verbal communication in the assessment of this personality trait. They included: the level of given details of the projects they delivered, a number of real examples of their achievements, the level of preparation for the interview in terms of knowledge of the organisation and FDI.

#### **4.3.4 Objective 4: Determining the interviewer’s evaluation process**

In order to meet the objective the researcher explored the following:

- ✓ What is evaluated during the interview
- ✓ Applicant first impression in the interview
- ✓ Intuitive and quick judgements
- ✓ Hiring decision based on the candidate’s non-verbal behaviour
- ✓ Misjudgement and bias during the evaluation
- ✓ Disagreement among the panel members

##### **➤ What is evaluated during the interview?**

Participants mainly evaluate the candidates against competencies, business development track record, qualifications and organisational fit.

All participants stated that organisational fit has a significant importance in the organisation and is assessed during interviews. Values such as personality, professionalism, integrity, accountability, team playing and credibility are considered while assessing organisational fit.

FS4 commented:

*“The organisational fit is important and the ability to work in a small team, also with the international team... Somebody who wants to work on their own would not fit. We need someone with strong personality, who is confident and proactive”.*

HR1 and LS3 also mentioned that liking is important while evaluating the candidate’s fit in the organisation and the team. When there are two candidates who both scored well in the interview

and have similar experience, the interviewers make their hiring decision on how likable they are. Also FS4, FS5 and CCBS6 admitted that being likable is an advantage for the candidate. FS4 added:

*“It is easier to get on with others and it is valued in our organisation. When they have a good sense of humour and their views agree with your own, it will influence your decision”.*

CCBS2 stated that he does not necessary have to like the candidates to evaluate them positively. However, he always considers whether they will have a negative impact on the team or whether they will work on their own. If the person is not liked and would have to manage others then as he said: “It would be a disaster”.

CCBS2 assess the candidate’s behaviour and communication style during the interview and how they behave under pressure. The non-verbal aspects of performance have an impact on his evaluation. CCBS6 also evaluates a level of engagement, creativity, level of energy, and how convincing and authentic the candidate is.

➤ **Applicant first impression in the interview**

The participants were asked what they pay attention to during first 3 minutes of interaction with the candidate. The researcher aimed to identify whether there are any non-verbal cues that play an important role in creating first impression. Many participants expressed that the aspects of the candidate’s appearance and some non-verbal cues are noticeable straight away in the interview including: the way they dress, their presentability, facial expression, eye contact, smile, handshake, their behaviour, and a degree of their confidence. Beside the non-verbal aspects interviewers are primarily focused on the questions they are going to ask, whether the candidate holds the conversation and engages with the panel members.

CCBS2 commented:

*“If they come to the interview and the first thing they do is smile and shake your hand that put everybody at ease. The same happens in the sales meeting setting”.*

A number of participants stated that first impression has an impact on their evaluation of the candidate.

HR1 said:

*“Most people make up their mind within first 3-4 minutes. I believe it. You can rule someone out within 3 minutes, but I don’t think you can rule someone in within 3 minutes. You can lose in 3 minutes, not win the interview”.*

LS3 stated:

*“These 2-3 minutes can make a huge difference; sort out the whole meeting with the client or the interviewer. It is connecting. Some do that well, others don’t as they are tense and focused. I absolutely would evaluate more positively a person who makes a great impression and connect at the meeting”.*

Also FS5 agreed:

*“You can only make one first impression. If you make a very bad impression it is hard to recover. Usually first impression carries through the meeting”.*

LS3 added:

*“It’s about liking or not liking. I’ve met someone of a big character, innocent and open... I thought ‘I hope he’ll do well in the interview’. This happened over 3 minutes”.*

CCBS2 and FS4 admitted that many of these processes are subconscious and they may not be aware of them.

FS4 expressed his expectations from the candidate:

*“It is not like I am ticking some boxes during the first 3 minutes but I would pick it immediately. We take it as given that somebody would dress professionally; shake my hand, smile and talk...But I would be more interested what they are going to say to me”.*

### ➤ **Intuitive and quick judgements**

Some of the participants admitted that they made a quick or intuitive judgements regarding the candidates in the interview. For HR1 and CCBS2 the reason for a negative evaluation was inappropriate candidate’s dress code for the interview.

CCBS2 commented:

*“They didn’t look sharp. This is the first thing you see. This is an interview in a semi-state organisation. The person should know that we expect a certain level of professional dress code”.*

However, he also added:

*“But you still need to stick to the questions around competencies. I would never make my decision based only on the snap-judgement. Also I’ve never hired somebody when their appearance and non-verbal behaviours were positive and their answers were not. If initial non-verbal signals are wrong, the person can recover”.*

CCBS2 also provided another example where the panel members had a feeling about the candidate’s personality. They were concerned that there might be an issue with him working among female colleagues. They decided to set up an additional informal meeting with two female employees in order to clarify this issue by observing the candidate’s body language. At the end their intuitive feeling about the candidate were correct and despite the candidate’s excellent experience, they couldn’t offer him the job.

LS3 also provided two examples of the situations when he and other panel member made a quick hiring decision regarding the candidate. He said:

*“She answered questions well, made a smile. She wowed us, made us happy, and engaged with us like she will engage with the client. Job done- hired”.*

He also described a negative impression of the candidate:

*“The candidate displayed a lack of knowledge about the country and the job at the beginning of the interview... Within 10 minutes we were thinking how to get this person out the room”.*

The participants were asked whether they would trust another panel members’ ‘gut feeling’ about the candidate or whether they would seek from them some contextualisation and the rationale behind this feeling. Most participants stated that they wouldn’t trust other’s intuition without a reason being given. However CCBS2 added:

*“The managers have natural understanding what works rather than systematic understanding due to their experience. Their ‘gut feelings’ are usually accurate”.*

➤ **Hiring decision based on the candidate’s non-verbal behaviour**

All participants agreed that the candidate’s non-verbal behaviours influence their evaluation. HR1, CCBS2, FS4 and CCBS6 were able to provide the examples when the hiring decision was made mainly based on non-verbal behaviours. The decisions were made based on inappropriate candidate’s dress-code, the person’s intense, slightly aggressive or confrontational communication style, constant interrupting during the interview or overly

anxious behaviour. FS4 and LS3 stated that negative non-verbal behaviour have a stronger influence on the interviewer's evaluation than positive non-verbal behaviours. However, most participants agreed that usually it is a combination of verbal and non-verbal behaviours being assessed during the interview, and it is difficult to treat them separately.

CCBS6 provided an example from his work experience regarding the hiring decision being made based purely on the candidate physical attractiveness. A very attractive and stylish woman applied for a job in the organisation. She was overqualified for the role but motivated to work for this organisation. There were three people on the panel: two female and one male. According to the male member of the panel she performed excellent in the interview, however they did not hire her due to the female members' decision. CCBS6 said:

*"Other people took her apart the minute she left saying: 'matching bag?, who she thinks she is? This is not a catwalk!'. They did not interview her for her competencies. If she was badly dressed with bad hair she might have got this job".*

➤ **Misjudgement and bias during the evaluation**

HR1, CCBS2 and FS4 stated that biased judgement can be influenced by the interviewers' previous experience with other candidates. As FS4 said:

*"It can bring them to faster conclusions".*

CCBS2 commented:

*"Sometimes you see somebody that has similar characteristics like the person from your experience that did a bad job. And then throughout the process you realise that the person is completely different".*

Also HR1 mentioned about situations where the hiring managers based on their intuition make hiring decisions:

*"Sometimes hiring managers say 'listen you need to trust me on that'. Most of these feeling are attached to the baggage of being an interviewer. Somebody did it before to them and the association is not good. It is usually subconscious. They are going with their gut".*

CCBS6 added that likability of the candidate can bias the interviewer's judgement:

*"You can be biased if you don't like the person. You need to ask yourself if it just because I don't like them? would they fit?".*

CCBS stated that some hiring managers are looking for people similar to them in terms of their views and opinions, and this might hamper the development of diverse teams and lead to group thinking and conservatism.

CCBS6, HR1 and LS3 admitted that they did make misjudgements about the candidates regarding the fairness of the selection process. In their opinion the candidate's impression management could play a role in this incorrect evaluation. CCBS6 stated:

*“Sometimes people don't turn out the way you want them to turn out. You ask yourself if this is due to a gap in the interview process or the person oversold themselves. Maybe it is a combination of both”.*

➤ **Disagreement among the panel members**

The participants agreed that they reach the agreement through communicating and explaining their views. Odd number of panel members also helps resolving any disparities in judgement. Seniority of the panel members has also impact on the final hiring decision made. LS3 commented:

*“Senior managers can be very strong characters while evaluating. Some can give very negative responses straight away. That colours the view of other people. Then two things can happen. You can lie and agree with them, or challenge them. And there were situations I didn't challenge them enough, and maybe I should”.*

FS4 added:

*“The person whose division the candidate might go to has a bit of extra weighting on this”.*

CCBS6 explained that panel members fall into roles. HR person focuses mainly on CV, reference check and competencies. Hiring manager evaluates the candidate from a team perspective and the neutral manager on the panel assess the organisational fit and the candidate's potential to grow beyond the role. All members of the panel are trying to make a collective decision based on these areas.

## Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusion

In the first part of this chapter the research findings are analysed and referred to the literature review in order to respond to the research objectives. In the second part of this chapter the conclusion and recommendations are outlined.

### 5.1 Discussion

#### 5.1.1 Objective 1: Validity of the employment interview as a selection tool

In agreement with Arvey & Campion (1982) and Armstrong (2006) the interview is the most popular selection tool also within the case study organisation. However, in contrast to Armstrong (2006) and Beardwell and Claydon (2010), the participants rated the effectiveness of the employment interview relatively high. Only one participant expressed that around 40% of external hires have not been extended after the probation period. However, the participant was not able to justify whether the reason behind this lies in the gaps in the interviewing process.

The validity of structured interviews is higher than the validity of low structured interviews (Anderson and Shackleton, 1993). Interview within the case study organisation are mainly competency-based panel interviews; therefore the candidates are evaluated against predetermined criteria by two to three interviewers. According to the participants there is room for flexibility regarding questions. As a result, the panel interviews have medium to low structure. According to Campion et al. (1997) using panel interviews can help save a time, enable quicker decisions, reduce interviewer bias, and ensure that the candidate is acceptable by the representative from different sectors of the organisation. All participants of this research see the value of panel interviews. However, they admitted that the weighting on the decision is not equal among the panel members. The hiring manager the candidate will rapport to has more impact on the decision-making process. In addition, more senior managers on the panel might also be more influential. That supports the study of Bozionelos (2005, cited in Macan, 2009) that focused on the social dynamic and group decision-making process, political games and power struggles within the interview panel.

Salgado and Moscoso (2002), McDaniel et al. (1994) and Judge (2000) stated that interview validity is now much greater than previously believed as organisations use additional methods to increase the validity of the selection process (Beardwell and Claydon, 2010). Also the case study organisation uses elements of situational interviews in the form of a role-playing exercise

and presentations which are included in the interview process, psychometric tests for senior roles and assessment centres as a screening tool. This increases the effectiveness of the selection process in the case study organisation.

The participants' strong positive attitude towards face-to-face interviews, especially these of lower structure, supports the Bakker and Bakker (2002) and Van Der Zee et al. (2000) studies. The participants' reasons of interview popularity are similar to the Torrington et al. (2008) findings. The interview is seen as a two way communication that creates a positive candidate experience. In agreement with Chapman and Zweig (2005), rapport building is very important also for the interviewed managers. For the participants many aspects of the candidate can be assessed only through a face-to-face interaction, especially for the sales and marketing roles such. These include: organisational fit, personality, engagement, motivation and communication style. According to Salgado and Moscoso (2002), lower structure of interviews, also used in the case study organisation, enables better assessment of personality dimensions and social skills, than highly structured interviews. The managers highlighted the importance of informal elements in the interview and expressed that a too rigid interview structure is a disadvantage. One of the managers mentioned interviewers' need for power as a reason for interview popularity. In his opinion interviewing and making hiring decisions are associated with a higher status in the organisation. Also Dipboye (1994) and Chen et al. (2008) state that interviewers with high need for power would prefer lower structured interviews in order to gain more control over the process.

### **5.1.2 Objective 2: Non-verbal behaviours that predict job performance**

All participants agreed that personality and non-verbal communication is not included in the written job criteria; however they all evaluate them while assessing the candidates. The hiring managers observe and assess during interviews: the candidates' confidence, impression made, communication style (verbal and non-verbal), the way applicants engage with the panel members, their energy level, physical appearance, style of their body language, and the way they speak.

Due to the sales and marketing type of most jobs within the organisation and its nature, hiring managers assess the following non-verbal behaviours: applicants' dress code and physical appearance, facial expression, hands movement, handshake, body tension, posture, personal space, body odour, excessive sweating, smile, body movements and voice pitch frequency. In addition, during a role-play exercise, the candidates are put under pressure like they would face

in a client situation and are asked challenging questions. The interviewers observe their behaviours, communication style and the ability to engage with the client during this exercise.

The findings partially support the Barrick et al. (2009) study that physical attractive candidates are evaluated more favourably than unattractive candidates. A few participants admitted that physical attractiveness might have a positive influence on the interviewer's evaluation; others had an opposite opinion. One participant gave an example when female physical attractiveness had a negative impact on the evaluation by other female managers. This might support the Heilman and Saruwatari (1977) study that proved unfavourable evaluation of attractive female candidates, especially for jobs that traditionally require masculine characteristics (e.g. managerial positions). However, despite of physical attractiveness all participants agreed that an appropriate professional image is very important in sales and marketing while dealing with external and internal customers. It involves reputation management, professional attire, also international and cross-cultural manners. (Lounsbury *et al.*, 2014).

### **5.1.3 Objective 3: Non-verbal communication and personality traits**

In order to assess person-organisation fit the managers evaluate the candidates' personality in the employment interview. The participants expressed that assessing candidates' personality is very difficult as they often manage the way their present themselves. The findings indicate that hiring managers are aware of the use of impression management tactics by the candidate to some extent.

Most participants agreed that the candidates' non-verbal behaviours can express their personality traits. These findings are in agreement with Burnett and Motowidlo (1998), Weisbuch and Ambady (2009), and Barrick *et al.*(2011) who state that non-verbal cues communicate feelings, intentions, thoughts and express stable psychological characteristics such as personality. Two personality dimensions were investigated in this research: extraversion and conscientiousness. The findings partially support the DeGroot and Gooty (2009) and Barrick and Mount (1991) studies that extraversion is a valid predictor of job performance. The participants stated that extravert people have more potential to be successful in sales and marketing as they need to build relationships with the potential clients and have interpersonal skills and confidence in dealing with people. However this is not always the case and it depends on the type of sale. Introverts can work as solution partners in a high value-low volume sale, with decision-making process lasting 2 years. Some participants expressed that even introverts can learn interpersonal skills and cope well in the extravert world. There are successful

introvert people in the organisation; however there is a slight tendency to employ extravert people in sales and marketing. In the participants' opinion candidate's personality can be assessed by evaluating both verbal and non-verbal aspects of the candidate's behaviour. However personality is quite difficult to evaluate. According to the participants extroverts smile more often, gesticulate more than introverts, and come out with the answers straight away. Their answers are longer and more detailed. Introverts also were described as quiet and shy. This supports the Lieberman and Rosenthal (2001) and Watson and Clark (1997) and DeGroot and Gooty (2009) studies.

The findings also support the Barrick and Mount (1991) and Jugde (2002) results that conscientiousness is a valid predictor of job performance. In agreement to scholars the hiring managers associated high level of conscientiousness with the candidate's professional dress code Scherer (1979), good preparation for the interview (Chen et al., 2011), keeping eye contact (Witteman et al., 2009) and a high level of self-control. However, they put an emphasis on the candidates' verbal communication while assessing conscientiousness.

#### **5.1.4 Objective 4: Interviewer's evaluation process**

Participants mainly evaluate the candidates against competencies, business development track record, qualifications and organisational fit. All participants agreed that they also evaluate candidates' personality and related to it non-verbal behaviours and physical appearance. Graves and Karren (1992), Groves (2005), Barrick and Mount (1991), and Salgado (1997) state that competencies such as personality and attitudes, values and enthusiasm matter more than cognitive performance and education for the managerial and customer service roles. This is also important in the case study organisation, where sales and marketing executives have also leadership responsibilities towards their team. The findings also support the studies of Motowidlo and DeGroot (1999) and Burnett and Motowidlo (1998) that both visual and vocal cues influence interviewers' judgements about applicants' suitability for employment in managerial positions, and also impact personal reactions that people form about interviewees such as liking, trust, and attributed credibility, that interviewers might form about applicants. These personal reactions were also mentioned by the participants in the research. In addition, negative non-verbal behaviours have a stronger influence on the participants' evaluations than positive non-verbal behaviours, which is described by Anderson and Shackleton (1995) as the horns/halo effect.

The participants stated that they would not evaluate candidates' non-verbal behaviours separately from verbal responses; however the findings suggest that there were situations where the hiring decision has been made based only on the non-verbal cues. The participants provided examples where the candidates were evaluated based on their physical appearance. These findings support the Tsai *et al.* (2010, p. 72) results that physical attractiveness predicts interviewer evaluation above and beyond the candidate's verbal responses and qualifications, especially in jobs with a customer-contact requirements.

For all participants candidate's organisational fit has a significant impact on their evaluation. According to Judge *et al.* (2000, p. 397) interviewers assessing P-O fit are more likely to be affected by information-processing biases (e.g. stereotyping, contrast effect or snap decision-making) especially in low structured interviews. Some of the participants stated that the hiring managers are evaluating more favourably people similar to them. It supports the Chen *et al.* (2008) and Garcia *et al.* (2008) findings that applicants that are perceived to have a greater similarity are judged more favourably in terms of organisational fit. In addition, Kristof-Brown *et al.* (2002, cited in Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 216) highlighted an importance of the candidate's non-verbal behaviours in developing the perception of similarity. Most non-verbal behaviours assessed by participants are in fact job-related and have an impact on the sales and marketing executives' performance. However, the findings also suggest that some of evaluated non-verbal behaviours might not be related to the job-performance and can develop biased judgement.

Participants of this research stated that sometimes they don't make their evaluation on the systematic analysis, but that they have natural understanding what works due to their experience. Many participants admitted that the first impression of the candidate has an influence on their evaluation. This is in agreement with the Barrick *et al.* (2011, p. 331) study suggesting that initial impressions developed during rapport building influence interviewer's decision-making. The authors also state that job-related attributes such as extraversion and verbal skills can be meaningfully assessed within the first few minutes of the interview. However, there is also a risk of the 'expectancy effect', where interviewers can form either positive or negative impressions of candidates based on their application form or initial contact and this can impact subsequent decisions (Anderson and Shackleton, 1995, cited in Gunninge *et al.*, 2011, p. 127).

## 5.2 Conclusion

The findings suggest that despite the predetermined competency-based criteria the hiring managers tend to additionally evaluate candidate's personality, organisational fit and associated with them non-verbal behaviours and physical appearance. Lower level of interview structure enables assessing these criteria: therefore the hiring managers prefer this type of interview over highly structured. Even in structured interviews rapport building with the candidate is impossible to avoid, thus there is always room for less informal interaction. The hiring managers are not accurately trained how to use specific selection tools and how to assess candidates' non-verbal behaviours in the case study organisation. The managers mainly rely on their work experience and their personal preferences and opinions rather than on the systematic assessments and evaluations. The selection system in the organisation is relatively structured in terms of external recruitment. While competencies are the basic criterion of the evaluation, there are also elements of situational interviews, presentations, and comprehensive reference checking that increase the validity of the overall selection process. However, there is always room for flexibility regarding questions and their evaluation.

According to Champan and Zweig (2005, cited in Chen *et al.*, 2008, p. 1057) trained interviewers tend to structure their interviews more than untrained interviewers. Therefore, there is a need for formal training that would provide knowledge about selection tools and change the hiring managers' negative attitude towards more structured interviews. The training also informs about possible biases that interviewers might be vulnerable to. The findings suggest that the hiring managers consciously and subconsciously pay attention to the candidates' non-verbal behaviours and physical appearance. According to Barrick *et al.* (2012) it is not possible to avoid the influence of the non-verbal behaviours even in highly structured interviews. The author of this research agrees with Burnett and Motowidlo (1998, p. 978) that interviewers should be trained how to correctly decode and use the non-verbal information expressed by the applicants. Riggio and Riggio (2002), DeGroot and Gooty (2009) concluded that non-verbal cues are behavioural manifestations of underlying personality traits and they might actually be a source of validity. Sales and marketing roles requires specific non-verbal behaviours and the nature of the organisation also requires professional dress-code. The author agrees that interviewers should pay attention to the job-related non-verbal behaviours in the interview and recognise those that can result in the biased judgement. Training should help the hiring managers to distinguish between those cues.

Participants are trying to be consistent and fair in their evaluations, however based on the analysis of findings and literature review the researcher concluded that the hiring managers can be biased in their judgement due to: a lower structure of interviews, a lack of knowledge and training, and the fact that as human beings we are naturally vulnerable to biases. The interview will still remain a popular selection tool in most organisations; therefore there is a need for its improvement and use of other selection tools in order to increase the effectiveness of the overall selection process.

The majority of evaluation processes regarding human personality and non-verbal communication happen at the subconscious level and usually we are not able to control them. However, more structured interviews and evaluation processes, together with the provided the training can improve the validity of the interview. The author also agrees with Hargie (2006) that adopting either a highly structured or unstructured interview format may fail some of the objectives of interviewing. Therefore, it is important to consider a more flexible approach that will provide the consistent and effective assessment, allow the candidates to present fully their skills and qualities, and facilitate a positive candidate's experience. The case study organisation is partially doing this by modifying the degree of structure within a single interview (Campion *et al.*, 1997; cited in Hargie, 2006, Posthuma *et al.*, 2002,) and carries out more than one interview where each of them has its own purpose (Blackman and Funder, 2002). As panel interviews enable comparison of the different views and opinions and potentially can increase the validity of the interview, it is also important to distribute equally decision-making power between the panel members in the case study organisation. In addition, interview questions should be more standardised and applied to all candidates in order to increase the evaluation consistency. Overall, the case study organisation has a quite effective selection process considering a number of successful hires; however there is always room for improvement.

### **5.3 Recommendations for further research**

All participants were male; therefore it would be beneficial for further research to investigate opinions of female hiring managers. Women might have a different view on the research problem and a different level of ability to read non-verbal signals than men. The sales and marketing nature of jobs in the case study organisation have an impact on the job requirements both written and unwritten, therefore it would be beneficial to conduct research in an organisation that is not sales related.

## Chapter 6: Reflection

*“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young”.*

Henry Ford

I started this chapter with a quote of Henry Ford because I feel that these words truly describe the meaning of my learning and development process. Two years ago I made a very important decision to change my career. As I wasn't fulfilled working as a social care worker I have chosen an MBA programme in order to become a HR professional. I believe it is never too late for change and developing yourself, and as per Henry Ford's thought it really is a great feeling to do it. The MBA programme enabled me to change and progress my career, but even most importantly contributed to my personal change.

### 6.1 Doing an MBA course

In the first semester of the MBA course as part of the Professional and Personal Development module we had to set our academic, career and personal goals. When I looked back at the list of my goals, I was positively surprised how many of them I've accomplished during two years of the MBA course. The goals that I successfully realized include:

- ✓ gaining knowledge in the areas of Business and Human Resource Management
- ✓ improvement of my language skills: spoken and written, to the extent that I feel confident to express my views and opinions at the fluent level
- ✓ finding an internship while in college to gain experience in HR
- ✓ finding a good job in HR
- ✓ passing exams with good results
- ✓ learning more advanced computer skills
- ✓ managing my time efficiently

The accomplishment of all these goals contributed to the development of my self-believe and happiness in my personal and professional life.

## **6.2 Learning process**

Peter Honey and Alan Mumford based upon the work of Kolb (1988) identified four distinct learning styles: Activist, Theorist; Pragmatist and Reflector. After completing the questionnaire in class I found out a little more about the way I perceive, interpret and respond to information as an individual. Everybody is unique and it is beneficial to be aware of our strengths to take advantages of them, and our weaknesses to improve on them.

According to the questionnaire results I am a reflector/theorist. As a reflector my strengths are: being careful, thorough, methodical and thoughtful. I am also good at listening to others and I rarely jump to conclusions. As a theorist I am a perfectionist who seeks rationale explanations for observable events (Honey and Mumford, 1992, cited in Swailes and Senior, 1999). I like to understand the theory behind the actions. I need models, concepts and facts in order to engage in the learning process. I prefer to analyse and synthesise, drawing new information into a systematic and logical 'theory' (Mobbs, no date). There are also weaknesses of my learning styles and it is crucial to acknowledge them and improve them. Sometimes, I have a tendency to hold back from direct participation and not take enough risk. I can be slow to make up my mind, not assertive with a low tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. I also might be intolerant of anything subjective or intuitive. I must admit that most of the information I've read about a reflector/theorist is true to me but also I found myself quite practical like a pragmatist. Being a reflector/theorist probably partly explains why I was shy in terms of public speaking or presenting in front of the class. That also explains why I enjoy studying so much, gathering and analysing information. Being a reflector/theorist also helped me conducting research and writing my dissertation, especially while doing the literature review and data analysis. According to Kolb (1988, cited in Swailes and Senior, 1999, p. 1) effective learners need to develop all four learning abilities. It is not possible to be good at all these types of learning; however I do realise that while I possess many strong skills as a reflector/theorist, I also need to develop and work on other skills. To be a good HR manager in the future, I need to be more flexible, open-minded and optimistic, cope well with change and uncertainty, and be able to take a risk like an activist.

## **6.3 Time management**

During the MBA course as well as during completing my dissertation I have developed time management skills. Time management was difficult especially when I had to reconcile a part-

time course and full-time work. However due to my dedication and a few time management techniques, it was possible to accomplish.

Stephen's Covey (1994) urgent/important matrix which divides our general activities to two categories:

- ✓ Important activities have an outcome that leads to the achievement of your goals
- ✓ Urgent activities demand immediate attention, and are often associated with the achievement of someone else's goals

We can get four possible combinations of them: urgent and important, urgent and not important, not urgent and important, not urgent and not important. According to Covey (1994) most of us spend about 15-20% of our time for the not urgent but important activities which is definitely not enough. I've realised that I spend not enough time on the important/not urgent activities while wasting too much time on urgent/not important and not urgent/not important ones. I had to prioritise my MBA course over socialising with my friends and other hobbies. As I have a tendency of delaying the start of challenging tasks. This mechanism is called procrastination and defines our tendency to seek comfort by avoiding high priority and challenging tasks. That probably explains why it was hard for me to start doing my assignments or dissertation. I've divided my dissertation into small achievable pieces and completed them step by step. This helped me to complete the project and decrease the overwhelming feeling regarding the large size of the task. I was also rewarding myself when each step of my activity is accomplished by taking a day break.

#### **6.4 Dissertation process**

Completing my dissertation enabled me developing many useful skills. Interviewing senior managers gave me a great experience and build up my confidence. As an interview is an interpersonal interaction, things can easily go in an unexpected way. I have learned how to take an advantage of this and learn through experience. I've developed additional questions in order to gather beneficial information for my research. I also made some adjustments to my research objectives in order to present them in a clear and concise way and respond to the research problem better. Also I've realised that questions regarding personality dimensions: extraversion and consciousness were too broad and a few of the interviewees had some difficulties in interpreting them. I could possibly use narrow personality traits (Dudley *et al.*, 2006, p. 40) in order to make these questions clearer to the participants.

I have also met some obstacles during my research that I successfully overcame. As I am not native English speaker I needed more time than my Irish colleagues to read and analyse academic literature. The broad choice of materials regarding my topic and the size of the task decreased my motivation at the start of the project. However, dividing the task to small steps and organising them a timeframe helped me to accomplish the project. As a full time worker I had to organise my time more efficiently. I had to take time off work in order to conduct research interviews and complete my dissertation.

Overall the MBA course has been both a challenging and exciting experience. I would strongly recommend this course to people that wish to develop their business knowledge and many other skills related to people management. It is very important to realise that despite of all benefits and developmental opportunities this course can offer, it is also a two year commitment and very hard work that requires a high level of dedication and motivation. However it is definitely well worth the effort!

## Bibliography

- Agryle, M. and Colman, A. (1995) *Social psychology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Akhuly A. and Gupta, M. (2014) 'Competency based recruitment decisions: A lens model approach', *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 17(4), pp. 279-306. PsycARTICLES. [Online]. (Accessed: 22 July 2015).
- Ambady, N. and Rosenthal, R. (1992) 'Thin slices of expressive behaviour as predictors of interpersonal consequences: a meta-analysis', *Psychological Bulletin*, 111(2), pp. 256-274. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 May 2015).
- Armstrong, M. (2006) *A handbook of human resource management practice*. 10<sup>th</sup> edn. London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Aronson E. (2012) *The social animal*. 11<sup>th</sup> edn. New York: Worth Publishers.
- Barrick, M, Shaffer, J. and DeGrassi, S. (2009) 'What you see may not be what you get: relationships among self-presentation tactics and ratings of interview and job performance', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 39, pp. 333- 339. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 July 2015).
- Barrick. M, Dustin, S., Giluk, T., Stewart, G., Shaffer, J. and Swider, B. (2012) 'Candidate characteristics driving initial impressions during rapport building: implications for employment interview validity', *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*, 85, pp. 330-352. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 20 May 2015).
- Beardwell J. and Claydon, T. (2010) *Human resource management: a contemporary approach*. 6<sup>th</sup> edn. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Birkmann, S. and Kvale, S. (2015) *Interviews. Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. California: SAGE Publication Inc.
- Blumberg, B., Cooper, D. and Schindler, P. (2005) *Business research methods*. Berkshire: McGraw- Hill Education.
- Burgoon, J., Blair, P. and Strom, R. (2008) 'Cognitive biases and non-verbal cue availability in detecting deception' *Human Communication Research*, 34, pp. 572-599. Available at: <http://media.usm.maine.edu/~lenny/idt%20biases.pdf> (Accessed: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014)
- Burnett, J. and Motowidlo, S. (1998) 'Relations between different sources of information in the structured selection interview', *Personnel Psychology*, 51, pp. 963-983. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 25 May 2015).
- Chen, Ch., Huang, Y., Huang, T. and Liu, I. (2011) 'The mediating process linking applicant personality traits and interviewer evaluation', *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 19(3), pp. 287-300. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 7 June 2015).
- Chen, Ch., Lee, H. and Yeh, Y. (2008) 'The antecedent and consequence of person-organization fit: ingratiation, similarity, hiring recommendations and job offer', *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 16(3), pp. 210-219. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 19 July 2015).
- Chen, Y., Tsai, W. and Hu, Ch. (2008) 'The influences of interviewer-related and situational factors on interviewer reactions to high structured job interviews',

- International *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19(6), pp. 1056-1071. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 25 May 2015).
- Chen, Y., Tsai, W. and Hu, Ch. (2008) 'The influences of interviewer-related and situational factors on interviewer reactions to high structured job interviews', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19(6), pp. 1056-1071. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 July 2015).
  - Covey, S., Merrill, R. and Merrill, R. (1994) *First Things First: To Live, to Love, to Learn, to Leave a Legacy*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
  - Creswell, J. (2014) *Research design*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. California: Sage Publications, Inc.
  - Deepa, S. and Seth, M. (2013) 'Do soft skills matter?' – Implications for educators based on recruiters' perspective, *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, 7(1), pp. 7-20. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 July 2015).
  - DeGroot, T. and Motowidlo, S. (1999) 'Why visual and vocal interview cues can affect interviewers' judgement and predict job performance' *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84(6), pp. 986-993. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014).
  - Dougherty, T., Turban, D. and Callender, J. (1994) 'Confirming first impressions in the employment interview: a field study of interview behaviour' *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(5), pp. 659-665. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 May 2015).
  - Dudley, N., Orvis, K., Lebiecki, J. and Cortina, J. (2006) 'A meta-analytic investigation of conscientiousness in the prediction of job performance: examining the intercorrelations and the incremental validity of narrow traits', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(1), pp. 40-57. [Online]. Available at: [http://emilkirkegaard.dk/en/wp-content/uploads/A-Meta-Analytic-Investigation-of-Conscientiousness-in-the-Prediction-of-Job-Performance-Examining-the-Intercorrelations-and-the-Incremental-Validity-of-Narrow-Traits..asp1\\_.pdf](http://emilkirkegaard.dk/en/wp-content/uploads/A-Meta-Analytic-Investigation-of-Conscientiousness-in-the-Prediction-of-Job-Performance-Examining-the-Intercorrelations-and-the-Incremental-Validity-of-Narrow-Traits..asp1_.pdf) (Accessed: 9 June 2015).
  - Forbes, R. and Jackson, R. (1980) 'Non-verbal behaviour and the outcome of selection interviews' *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 53, pp. 65-72. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 25 June 2015).
  - Garcia, M., Posthuma, R. and Colella, A. (2008) 'Fit perceptions in the employment interview: The role of similarity, liking, and expectations', *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 81, pp. 173- 189. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 19 July 2015).
  - Graves, L. and Karren, R. (1992) 'Interviewer decision processes and effectiveness: an experimental policy-capturing investigation' *Personnel Psychology*, 45, pp. 313-340. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 May 2015).
  - Gunningle, P., Heraty, N. and Morley, M. (2011) *Human resource management in Ireland*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan
  - Gupta, N. (2013) 'Effective body language in organisations', *The IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, VII(1), pp. 35-44. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 June 2015).
  - Hargie, O. (2006) *The handbook of communication skills*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Hove: Routledge.
  - Higgins, Ch. And Judge, T. (2004) 'The effect of applicant influence tactics on recruiter perceptions of fit and hiring recommendations: a field study', *Journal of*

*Applied Psychology*, 89(4), pp. 622- 632. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.timothy-judge.com/Higgins-Judge%20IB-Recruiters%20JAP.pdf> (Accessed: 16 July 2015).

- Huffcutt, A., Culbertson, S. and Weyhrauch, W. (2013) ‘Employment Interview Reliability: New meta-analytic estimates by structure and format’ ,*International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 21(3)3, pp. 264-276. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 June 2015).
- Jonas, E., Schulz-Hardt, S., Frey, D. and Thelen N. (2001) ‘Confirmation bias in sequential information search after preliminary decisions: an expansion of dissonance theoretical research on selective exposure to information’ , *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 80(4), pp. 557-571. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 May 2015).
- Judge, T., Higgins, Ch. And Cable. D (2000) ‘The employment interview: A review of recent research and recommendations for future research’ ,*Human Resource Management Review*, 10(4), pp. 383-406 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.iit.edu/news/iittoday/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Judge-Higgins-Cable-.pdf> (Accessed: 7 July 2015).
- Kim, T., Aryee, S., Loi, R. and Kim, S. (2013) ‘Person–organization fit and employee outcomes: test of a social exchange model’ , *International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 24(19), pp. 3719-3737. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 July 2015).
- Kleinmann, M. and Klehe, U. (2011) ‘Selling oneself: Construct and criterion-related validity of impression management in structured interviews’ , *Human Performance*, 24(1), pp. 29-46. PsycINFO [Online]. (Accessed: 20 July 2015).
- Kutcher, E., Bragger, J. and Masco, J. (2013) ‘How interviewees consider content and context cues to person-organisation fit’ , *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 21(3), pp. 294-308. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 19 July 2015).
- Lawson, E. (2006) *Body language and the first line manager*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing.
- Lieberman, M. and Rosenthal, R. (2001) ‘Why introverts can’t always tell who likes them: Multitasking and non-verbal decoding’ , *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80(2), pp. 294-310. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.scn.ucla.edu/pdf/Lieberman%26Rosenthal.pdf> (Accessed: 7 June 2015).
- Lievens, F. and De Paepe, A. (2004) ‘An empirical investigation of interviewer-related factors that discourage the use of high structure interviews’ , *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 25, pp. 29- 46. Available at: <http://users.ugent.be/~flievens/interview.pdf> (Accessed: 16 July 2015).
- Lord, R. and Maher, K. (1993) *Leadership and information processing: Linking perceptions and performance*. London: Routledge. [Online]. Available at: [http://samples.sainsburysebooks.co.uk/9781134858521\\_sample\\_517166.pdf](http://samples.sainsburysebooks.co.uk/9781134858521_sample_517166.pdf) (Accessed: 15 May 2015).
- Lounsbury, J., Foster, N., Levy, J. and Gibson, L. (2014) ‘Key personality traits of sales manager’ , *Work* 48(2), pp. 239-253. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 20 July 2015).
- Macan, T. (2009) ‘The employment interview: A review of current studies and directions for future research’ , *Human Resource Management Review* 19(3), pp. 203-

218 [Online]. Available at:

<http://mavweb.mnsu.edu/howard/The%20employment%20interview.pdf> (Accessed: 6 July 2015).

- Mast, M., Bangerter, A., Bulliard, C., and Aerni, G. (2011) 'How accurate are recruiters' first impressions of applicants in employment interviews?' ,*International Journal of Selection & Assessment*, 19(2), pp. 198-208. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 21 July 2015).
- McDaniel, M., Whetzel, D., Schmidt, F. and Maurer, S. (1994) 'The validity of employment interview: A comprehensive review and meta-analysis', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(4), pp. 599-616. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.people.vcu.edu/~mamcdani/Publications/McDaniel%20et%20al%201994%20JAP%20Validity%20of%20interviews.pdf> (Accessed: 6 July 2015).
- Mkansi, M. and Acheampong, E. (2012) 'Research philosophy debates and classifications: students' dilemma', *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 10(2), pp. 132-140. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 July 2015).
- Mobbs, R. (no date) University of Leicester. Available at: <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/training/eresources/teaching/theories/honey-mumford> (Accessed: 17 July 2015).
- Morgeson, F., Campion, M., Dipboye, R., Hollenbeck, J, Murphy, K. and Schmitt, N. (2007) 'Considering the use of personality tests in personnel selection contexts' *Personnel Psychology*, 60, pp. 683- 729. Available at: [https://www.msu.edu/~morgeson/morgeson\\_campion\\_dipboye\\_hollenbeck\\_murphy\\_schmitt\\_2007a.pdf](https://www.msu.edu/~morgeson/morgeson_campion_dipboye_hollenbeck_murphy_schmitt_2007a.pdf) (Accessed: 21 July 2015).
- Motowidlo S., Dunnette, M., Carter, G., Tippins, N. Burnett, J., Werner, S. and Vaughan, M. (1992) 'Studies of the structured behavioural interview', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77(5), pp. 571-587. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 25 May 2015).
- Mount, M., Barick, M. and Strauss, J. (1994) 'Validity of observer rating of the Big Five personality factors', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(2), pp. 272-280. [Online]. Available at: <https://home.ubalt.edu/tmitch/641/barrick%20mount%20strauss%20big%20five%20obs%20ratings%20JAP%2094.pdf> (Accessed: 25 May 2015).
- Oliphant, G., Hansen, K. and Oliphant, B. (2008) 'Predictive validity of a behavioural interview technique', *Marketing Management Journal*, 18(2), pp. 93-105. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 May 2015).
- Pansu, P. and Dubois, M. (2002) 'The effects of face attractiveness on pre-selective recruitment' *Swiss Journal of Psychology*, 61(1), pp. 15-20. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 3 November 2014).
- Paulhus, D., Westlake, B., Calvez, S. and Harms, P. (2013) 'Self-presentation style in job interviews: the role of personality and culture', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 43(10), pp. 2042-2059. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 May 2015).
- Peeters, H. and Lievens, F (2006) 'Verbal and nonverbal impression management in behaviour description and situational interviews'' *International Journal of Selection*

*and Assessment*, 14(3), pp. 206-221. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 May 2015).

- Pohl, R. (2004) *Cognitive illusions- a handbook on fallacies and biases in thinking, judgement and memory*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Politis, J. and Politis, N. (2012) 'The relationship between servant leadership and personality characteristics: the 'Big Five'', *Proceedings of the European Conference on Management, Leadership & Governance*. pp. 332-339. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 19 July 2015).
- Posthuma, R., Morgeson, F. and Campion, M. (2002) 'Beyond employment interview validity: a comprehensive narrative review of recent research and trends over time', *Personnel Psychology*, 55, pp. 1-81. [Online]. Available at: [http://www.krannert.purdue.edu/faculty/campionm/Beyond\\_Employment\\_Interview.pdf](http://www.krannert.purdue.edu/faculty/campionm/Beyond_Employment_Interview.pdf) (Accessed: 9 June 2015).
- Raiden, A., Dainty, A. and Neale, R. (2008) 'Understanding employee resourcing in construction organizations', *Construction Management & Economics*. 26(11), pp. 1133-1143. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 July 2015).
- Ritche, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls C. and Ormston, R. (2013) *Qualitative research practice. A guide for social science students and researchers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (2005) *Qualitative interviewing. The art of hearing data*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. California: SAGE Publication Inc.
- Salgado, J. and Moscoso, S. (2002) 'Comprehensive meta-analysis of the construct validity of the employment interview', *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 11(3), pp. 299-324. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 25 May 2015).
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012) *Research methods for business students*. 6<sup>th</sup> edn. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Sekaran, U. and Bougie, R. (2010) *Research methods for business. A skill building approach*. 5<sup>th</sup> edn. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons LTD.
- Shahani-Denning, C. 'Physical attractiveness bias in Hiring: What is beautiful is good', pp. 14-17. [Online]. Available at: [http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/orsp\\_shahani-denning\\_spring03.pdf](http://www.hofstra.edu/pdf/orsp_shahani-denning_spring03.pdf) (Accessed: 9 July 2015).
- Sitser, T., van der Linden, D., and Born, M. (2013) 'Predicting sales performance criteria with personality measures: the use of the general factor of personality, the Big Five and narrow traits. *Human Performance*, 26(2), pp. 126-149. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 20 July 2015).
- Stanton, N. (2009) *Mastering communication*. 5<sup>th</sup> edn. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Swailes, S. and Senior, B. (1999) 'The dimensionality of Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles Questionnaire', *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 7(1), pp. 1-11. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 17 July 2015).
- Torrington, D., Hall, L. and Taylor, S. (2008) *Human resource management*. 7<sup>th</sup> edn. Harlow: Pearson Education.

- Tsai, W. and Huang, T. and Yu, H. (2012) 'Investigating the unique predictability and boundary conditions of applicant physical attractiveness and non-verbal behaviours on interviewer evaluations in job interviews' *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*, 85, pp. 60-79. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014).
- Van Dam K. (2003) 'Trait perception in the employment interview: A five-factor model perspective', *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 11(1), pp. 43-55. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 7 June 2015).
- Watkins, L. and Johnston, L. (2000) 'Screening job applicants: The impact of physical attractiveness and application quality', *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 8(2)pp. 76-84. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 7 June 2015).
- Weisbuch, M. and Ambady, N. (2009) 'Unspoken cultural influence: Exposure to and influence of non-verbal bias' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96(6), pp. 1104-1119. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 12 November 2014).
- Weng, L. and Chang, W. (2015) 'Does impression management really help? A multilevel testing of the mediation role of impression management between personality traits and leader-member exchange', *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 20(1), pp. 2-10. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 16 July 2015).
- Wittemen, C., van den Bercken, J. Claes, L. and Godoy A. (2009) 'Assessing rational and intuitive thinking styles', *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 25(1), pp. 39-47. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 10 May 2015).
- Yang, B., Kim, Y. and McFarland, Richard G. (2011) 'Individual differences and sales performance: a distal-proximal mediation model of self-efficacy, conscientiousness, and extraversion', *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 31(4), pp. 371-382. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost [Online]. (Accessed: 20 July 2015).

## Appendix 1:

### Semi-structure interview questionnaire

#### Interview as a selection tool

1. Can you tell me about the type and structure of the interviews conducted in this organisation?
2. In your opinion are the interviews which are conducted in this organisation a good tool in predicting actual job performance?
3. What the major competencies required for the positions in this organisation?
4. Is candidate's personality and non-verbal communication included in the job criteria?
5. Can you tell me about a situation where the candidate was highly rated in the interview, however did not perform well in the job? Please tell me what in your opinion was the reason of this misjudgement?
6. Can you please describe the type and structure of the interview that in your opinion would be a better predictor of the job performance?
7. Why do you think a face-to-face interview is the most popular selection tool?
8. Are there any other selection tools used in this organisation in the recruitment process?
9. What is your opinion on using a variety of selection tools in the recruitment and selection process?
10. What in your opinion is a downside of a competency based interview?

#### Non-verbal communication

1. Can you tell me what non-verbal communication is to you?
2. What types of candidates' non-verbal cues have you observed in the interview?

#### Questions asked after demonstrating the classification of non-verbal cues

3. After having a look at the provided classification can you tell me if there are any non-verbal behaviours that you did not know about or were not aware of?
4. Can you tell me if there are any non-verbal behaviours required from a successful candidate in this organisation?
5. Are non-verbal behaviours and physical appearance important to you while evaluating the candidate in the interview? Can you give me an example?
6. Do you need to like the potential candidate to evaluate him/her positively? What way the candidates need to behave during the interview for you to like them?
7. What way the successful candidate is expected to behave to fit into the organisation?
8. Do you think the candidate's non-verbal behaviour and physical attractiveness can have an impact on the job performance? If yes, please give me a few examples of this?
9. What do you pay attention to the most about the candidate in the first 5 minutes of the interview?
10. Can you describe a situation when candidate's non-verbal behaviour or physical appearance influenced your hiring decision?
  - a) Do you know the reason why it happened?
  - b) Was your decision right at the end?

11. Do you think that non-verbal behaviours express personality traits/characteristics? If yes, could you give me an example from your experience?
12. How would you describe an extravert and introvert in terms of non-verbal behaviour and physical appearance?
  - a) What way do they typically behave in the job interview?
  - b) In your opinion is an extravert or introvert a better candidate for the roles in this organisation?
13. How would you describe a candidate that shows conscientiousness personality attribute? How would they behave in the interview?

### **Evaluation and judgement**

1. Can you describe how you evaluate the candidates and what you base your decision on?
2. Can you describe a situation where you made a hiring decision without a deep and structured analysis? In your opinion what was the reason of your quick judgement?
3. Can you please describe a situation where you made a misjudgement regarding the candidate and why do you think it happened?
4. Tell me what are the most important aspects of the candidate's performance in the interview that influence your evaluation the most?
5. Can you describe a situation where you disagreed with other interviewers regarding the evaluation of the candidate performance in the interview and what was the reason? How did you resolve this disagreement?