

### *Feasibility*

Validation planning must consider the feasibility of the design requirements necessary to support an inference of validity. Validation efforts may be limited by time, resource availability, sample size, or other organization constraints including cost. In some situations these limits may narrow the scope of appropriate generalizations, but in other situations they may cause design flaws leading to inaccurate generalizations. While validation efforts with a narrow focus may have value, poorly executed validation efforts may lead the employer to reject beneficial selection procedures or accept invalid ones. Misleading, poorly designed validation efforts should not be undertaken.

### *Analysis of Work*

Historically, selection procedures were developed for specific jobs or job families. This often remains the case today, and traditional job analysis methods are still relevant and appropriate in those situations. However, organizations that experience rapid changes in the external environment, the nature of work, or processes for accomplishing work may find that traditional jobs no longer exist. In such cases, considering the competencies or broad requirements for a wider range or type of work activity may be more appropriate. Competency models are often used by organizations for many different purposes (Schippmann et al., 2000). When they are intended to support the underlying validity or use of a selection procedure, these *Principles* apply. The term “analysis of work” is used throughout this document and subsumes information that traditionally has been collected through job analysis methods as well as other information about the work, worker, organization, and work environment. The focus for conducting an analysis of work may include different dimensions or characteristics of work including work complexity, work environment, work context, work tasks, behaviors and activities performed, or worker requirements (e.g., knowledge, skills, abilities, and other personal characteristics [KSAOs]).

### *Purposes for Conducting an Analysis of Work*

There are two major purposes for conducting an analysis of work. One purpose is to develop selection procedures. Part of this process is an analysis of work that identifies worker requirements including a description of the general level of ability, skill, knowledge, or other characteristics needed. Such an analysis of work would determine the characteristics workers need to be successful in a specific work setting, or the degree to which the work requirements are similar to requirements for work performed elsewhere. The other purpose is to develop or identify criterion measures by assembling the information needed to understand the work performed, the setting in which the work is accomplished, and the organization’s goals.

There is no single approach that is the preferred method for the analysis of work. The analyses used in a specific study of work are a function of the nature of work, current information about the work, the organizational setting, the workers themselves, and the purpose of the study. Understanding the organization's requirements or objectives is important when selecting an appropriate method for conducting an analysis of work. The choice of method and the identification of the information to be gathered by that method should include the relevant research literature.

### *Level of Detail*

The level of detail required of an analysis of work is directly related to its intended use and the availability of information about the work. A less detailed analysis may be sufficient when there is already information descriptive of the work. A less detailed analysis may be appropriate when prior research about the job requirements allows the generation of sound hypotheses concerning the predictors or criteria across job families or organizations. When a detailed analysis of work is not required, the researcher should compile reasonable evidence establishing that the job(s) in question are similar in terms of work behavior and/or required knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or other characteristics, or falls into a group of jobs for which validity can be generalized. Situations that require a more detailed analysis of work may include those in which there is little existing work information available and the organization intends to develop predictors of specific job knowledge.

Any methods used to obtain information about work or workers should have reasonable psychometric characteristics and should be understood by the participants. Lack of consensus about the information contained in the analysis of work should be noted and considered further. Current job descriptions or other documents may or may not serve the immediate research purpose. Such information needs to be evaluated to determine its relevance and usefulness.

In some instances, an analysis of work may be the basis for assigning individuals to or selecting individuals for future jobs that do not exist at present. In other instances, an analysis of work may be used for transitioning workers from current to future work behaviors and activities. In both instances, the future work behaviors and activities, as well as the worker requirements may differ markedly from those that exist at present. Similarly, the work environment in which an organization operates also may change over time. For example, technology has permitted many individuals to work from virtual offices and replaced many functions that were previously conducted by individuals. Further, the global environment has expanded geographical boundaries and markets for many organizations. Procedures similar to those used to analyze current work requirements may be applicable for conducting an analysis of work in environments of rapid

change. However, other approaches that may be more responsive to the complexities of the emerging work environments are more appropriate (Peterson, Mumford, Borman, Jeanneret, & Fleishman, 1999; Schneider & Konz, 1989). The central point in such instances is the need to obtain reliable and relevant job information that addresses anticipated behaviors, activities, or KSAOs.

If there is reason to question whether people with similar job titles or work families are doing similar work, or if there is a problem of grouping jobs with similar complexity, attributes, behaviors, activities, or worker KSAOs, inclusion of multiple perspectives and incumbents in an analysis of work may be necessary. Even when incumbents are in positions with similar job titles or work families, studying multiple incumbents may be necessary to understand differences in work complexity, work context, work environment, job behaviors, or worker KSAOs as a function of shift, location, variations in how work is performed, and other factors that may create differences in similar job titles or worker families.