What is a performance rating scale?

Performance Appraisal · https://psyasia.com/kb/what-is-a-performance-rating-scale/

There are several techniques which can be used as a method of performance appraisal. Some traditional techniques involve using critical incident methods, graphic rating scales and ranking methods. Some modern techniques involve 360 degree performance appraisal, assessment centers, behaviorally anchored rating scales and using self appraisal.

Rating scales are a very structured method. This involves rating an employee on a scale which ranges from ‘poor’ to ‘excellent’ performance. The employee is assessed on this scale based on their performance or traits which are considered relevant to the job. For example, attributes such as punctuality, initiative, creativity and excellent knowledge in programs, such as Photoshop might be crucial to a role such as graphic designing. This method provides a structured and standardized way of evaluating performance and comparison between employees can be made easily. Rating scales are easy to interpret for both, the appraiser and the appraisee and is a very popular method.

It is very important to ensure that the traits and the competencies which the individual is evaluated against are clearly relevant to the job. For example, if the employees performance is not included in the selected traits, then their value to the organization might not be reflected. Some problems regarding interpretation might also occur. The perceptions/stereotypes an appraiser has of someone can be reflected either negatively or positively in the appraisal, and we might basically see in others what we want to see in them. For example, if a supervisor believes that an employee is good (halo effect), then they might ignore all the evidence which is against that individual. Instances such as showing up late might be ignored, or excuses for bad performance might occur. In the same way a supervisor might form a bad impression of someone (horn effect) and be more hard in their assessment and might even ignore evidence of good performance. The halo and horn effect can have huge implication on the appraisal process.

Perceived meaning on the selected traits on the rating scales can also be problematic if it is not clear. For example, if a competency, such as “initiative” might be perceived to an employee as reporting problems to a supervisor. However, another person might express this trait as not reporting problems

and might see this as being too dependent and therefore lacking in initiative. It is important to ensure that the language on the rating scales is clear, and factors such as “good” and “well done” might mean different things to different people.

Rating errors might also occur. This is because some people might deliberately avoid giving a bad rating to others because of the repercussions of it. In all performance appraisal meetings individuals should be encouraged to respond honestly because it is reflective on their performance and is designed to help them and the organization as a whole.