What is a Realistic Job Preview?

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A Realistic Job Preview (RJP) is an approach that enables the communication of aspects of a job to prospective applicants before the applicant accepts the offer of a position (Masternak, 2004). Simply put, the candidate get to perform certain aspects of the job prior to receiving the formal offer of employment.

For a RJP to be effective, it is critical to allow employees to obtain a balanced view of the positive and negative aspects of the position. Discrepancies between the applicant of the position and the actual operational requirements of the job role may lead to lower commitment levels and increased turnover. A RJP works by providing applicants with information that clarifies their expectations and allows them to have a more realistic perspective of the role. By providing a well designed and consistent RJP process to all potential employees, the organization can reduce turnover and increase commitment by allowing the employer to match job requirements with the applicant's qualities and the applicant to match their personal needs with the position requirements and the organizational culture.

Research on the effects of utilizing a RJP has demostrated cost savings due to increased performance and job survival (Gatewood & Field, 1990); decreased levels in turnover by better meeting employee expectations, improving their ability to cope, providing a perception of honesty for the organization and allowing them to self-select themselves for the position. In addition, there is also increased post-employment job satisfaction by giving them preparation to cope with the demands of the position and making them feel that the employer has been honest in their recruitment process.

Reference

Gatewood, R.D, Feild, H. S. (1990). Human Resource Selection. Sydney: The Dryden Press