

Daniel Kahneman: How Companies Can Improve Their Hiring Process

October 05, 2021

As a young lieutenant, Daniel Kahneman was asked to improve the Israeli army's haphazard process of assessing capabilities among combat-eligible recruits.

Armed with a psychology degree and infantry experience, he brashly made up some criteria, developed questions to elicit relevant facts, and insisted interviewers ask only what he specified. Each recruit would be given a score on each criterion, and the overall "Kahneman score" would be used in deciding how demanding a role was suitable.

His structured system worked. In the decades ahead, he reports, the army determined that the system really did result in better assignments. With the benefit of the structured scoring system, the interviewers also got better at predicting success with their more intuitive evaluations.

That was back in the 1950s. Dr. Kahneman has spent the decades since researching and writing on decision making—producing a body of work that has had wide influence in the business world. In 2002, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his psychological research into economics.

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