

Now That You're Banding, What Do You Need to Know?

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1

A Very Brief History of Banding

- Banding has been used for as long as people have been making hiring and promotion decisions
 - Sorting resumes into piles – hire, interview, get more info, reject
- More recently associated with statistical bands
 - Everyone within a group (band) is considered to be equally qualified according to the selection criteria used

Why Banding May Make Sense

- Measurement error in testing
 - The test score varies from the true score
- Tests only measure part of the criterion space
 - Banding allows for expansion of the criterion space at a later stage in the process
- Flexibility to hiring manager
 - Allows for final selection/placement to take into account person-organization or person-position fit
- Can reduce adverse impact
 - Most effective if using minority preference with sliding bands

Establishing Bands

- Statistical
 - Based on the standard error of measurement (SEM)
 - Calculated using the standard error of the difference (SED), test reliability, and confidence interval
 - Debates on the appropriateness of statistical bands and the proper calculation have been ongoing for 15 years
- Administrative
 - Typically drawn for convenience
 - Established based on perceptions of score equality
- Criterion or performance based
 - Used in testing (BARS, BSS), but not used in banding
 - Bands established based on performance indicators

Types of Bands

- Fixed bands
 - Bands are set and do not change based on who is selected from the band
 - Everyone in a band is selected before moving to the next band
- Sliding bands
 - Bands change based on who is selected from the band
 - When the top score in the band is selected, the band is recalculated before making additional selections

Common Bands in the Public Sector

- Statistical bands
 - Traditional is 1 SED and 95% confidence interval
 - Broader bands use 1.5 SEDs or increase confidence interval to 99%
 - Occasionally see bands based on 2 SEDs
- Administrative bands
 - Qualified, not qualified
 - Highly qualified, qualified, less qualified, not qualified
 - Scores from 100-90, 89-80, 79-70, 69-60
 - First 10%, second 10%, third 10%, etc.
- Rule of 'X' – variation on administrative bands
 - Rank order of scores is used to generate list based on a rule of 'X'
 - Rules of 3, 5, and 10 are common
 - Used with and without replacement (i.e., sliding and fixed bands)

Advantages of Banding

- Reduce adverse impact
 - Need sufficient minority applicant pool to work
 - Sliding bands work, fixed bands do not work well
 - Most effective with minority preference
- Next stage can focus on important traits or characteristics not measured by the test
 - Person-organization fit
 - Specific training or experience
- Flexibility to the hiring manager

Pitfalls of Banding

- Not a panacea for diversity or adverse impact
 - Minority preference can have a significant effect
 - Recent court cases indicate that minority preference will not stand up to legal scrutiny
- Loss of information and lower utility
 - Is an 89 really the same as an 80?
- Pass the buck from HR to the hiring official
 - Especially if the bands are large
- Can be misused or abused by the hiring official
 - Selection based on the wrong criteria
 - Selection based on similarity errors
- Banding can work against diversity if the test has no AI

How Banding Can Reduce Diversity

Test Scores

White	91
Minority	91
Minority	89
White	87
Minority	82
White	82
White	81
White	80
White	79
White	78

- Hiring/promoting four candidates.
 - Top down results in 2 whites and 2 minorities
 - Banding with random selection results in 3 whites and 1 minority
 - Banding with secondary selection could result in no minorities

Selecting From Within the Band

- Still under legal regulations and professional guidelines
 - Must be able to defend the process
- Need to help the hiring manager
 - What does he/she need?
 - What did the test measure?
 - How can the process be structured, yet efficient?
- Random selection
- Targeted selection on critical components

Implementing Banding

- How you implement banding depends on many factors including:
 - Organizational goals and objectives
 - Size of the applicant pool
 - Overall pool and minority pool
 - Ability of hiring officials to effectively and legally select from the band
 - Position being tested
 - Entry-level Firefighter versus Finance Manager
- Flexibility is the key

Implementing Banding (Cont.)

- Banding will not correct poor recruitment
 - Need diverse and qualified applicant pools
- Banding will not correct poor, biased, or discriminatory selection tests
 - Use non-biased, reliable, and valid selection measures prior to banding
 - It is possible to create tests with little or no AI
 - Low AI leads to diversity in the score distribution and increases diversity in the bands

Implementing Banding (Cont.)

- Educate and assist the hiring official
 - What does the selection test measure?
 - What critical components of the job does the test not measure?
 - What are effective and legal methods to hire from within the band?
 - Monitor their selections from the band
 - Ask them what they need!

Implementing Banding (Cont.)

- Use of small bands helps to deter misuse/abuse
- Use Rule of X with replacement
 - Keep the X small – 3, 5, or 10
 - Combines the best of both worlds – top down, score based selection, with banding
 - Minimizes utility loss
 - Sliding nature maximizes opportunity for lower scoring groups
 - Facilitates use of structured and job-related process by hiring official

Banding References

- Reference list handout is broken out into several categories
 - Essential reading
 - Statistical concepts and articles
 - Legal perspectives
 - Historical perspectives

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