(or sponsors) of respondents. The sample of organisations and the roles of respondents was therefore preoscribed. However, the number of respondents and the nature of their employment ensured a rich diversity within the sample. In collecting data, company anonymity was guaranteed but the 108 organisations represented reflected great diversity in terms of industrial sector, nature of the business and size. By way of example, organisations were drawn from: building and construction; charitable trusts; education; financial services; food production; health authorities and medicine; information technology; local government; manufacturing; professional bodies; professional consultants and services; publishing; research establishments; retailing; sport and leisure; and utilities. Of the 180 respondents 97 (54 per cent) were studying for postgraduate management qualifications and 83 (46 per cent) for professional membership of CIPD. Respondents' jobs varied widely in terms of occupation and position within the organisational hierarchy as illustrated by the following examples: Branch Manager; Change Manager; Design Engineer; Environmental Health Officer; Manager, Information Services; Occupational Therapist; Office Manager; Quality Assessor; Sales Consultant; Personnel Assistant; Personnel Manager; Personnel Officer; and Training Manager.

One further dimension relating to data collection is worthy of mention. During taught sessions students were formed into groups to share, discuss and analyse their flow charts. This was followed up by a tutor summary based on findings and conclusions reported by the groups and the tutor's overall analysis of the flow charts supplied. At this stage students had the opportunity to comment on the validity of their flow chart submitted and thereby correct any misperceptions.

Although not without their limitations flow charts represent a common way of depicting recruitment and/or selection processes as evidenced by their frequent usage in the HR literature (see for example, Bolton, 1997; Dessler, 1997; Corbridge and Pilbeam, 1998) and by organisations as a prescriptive tool. They can be used to show the individual elements making up the recruitment and selection process, where the process begins and ends and how the elements interrelate with each other. To analyse their strategic credentials flow charts have been evaluated against the schematic representation of SR&S depicted in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. Figure 6.2 has taken the primary and secondary features from the framework and developed them into a series of indicators that evidence their presence and identified where they could potentially be reflected in flow charts.

FINDINGS

Reporting of findings has been structured to replicate the sequential development of the primary and secondary features of SR&S as illustrated in Figures 6.1 and 6.2.

Primary Features: Strategic Integration

The strategic variant suggests that the primary feature of strategic integration drives the whole recruitment and selection process, but only one respondent

Figure 6.2 Indicators of Strategic Recruitment and Selection

Features Of Strategic Recruitment & Selection	Indicators Of Strategic Recruitment & Selection	Investigation Stage		
		1 Flow Charts Person Spec.Co. Manuals	2 Job Descrip	3 Inter-views
Primary features: • Strategic integration • Human resource planning • Long-term perspective	Strategy represents the start point for R&S.	✔	✔	✔
	HRP is used to translate strategic imperatives into organisationally driven HR attributes.	✔	✔	✔
	Needs analysis is informed by strategy and desired HR attributes.	✔	✔	✔
	Person specifications constructed around job, work group and organisation needs.	✘	✔	✔
	Person specifications and job descriptions reflect future as well as more immediate organisational/role demands.	✘	✔	✔
Secondary features: • Rigorous evaluation	Evaluation of R&S outcomes: organisation/strategic			
	contribution;	✔	✔	✔
	job performance;	✔	✔	✔
	candidate satisfaction;	✔	✔	✔
	performance against R&S budget.	✔	✔	✔
	Evaluation of R&S processes:			
	planning phase;	✔	✔	✔
	recruitment phase;	✔	✔	✔
	selection phase;	✔	✔	✔
	complete R&S process.	✔	✔	✔
• Sophisticated selection	Use of high reliability/validity methods.	✔	✔	✔
	Selection methods matched to demands of person spec.	✘	✔	✔
	Use of multiple methods.	✔	✔	✔
	Triangulation of their outputs in decision-making.	✘	✔	✔
	Use of structured and behavioural interviews.	✔	✔	✔
	Use of assessment centres.	✔	✔	✔
	Multi-stakeholder involvement in selection methods and decision making.	✘	✔	✔

• Multi-stakeholder involvement	Candidates as equal partners in a two-way process.	✗	✓	✓
	Use of candidate information packs.	✓	✓	✓
	Selection methods include those enabling candidates to asses the organisation.	✓	✓	✓
	Feedback offered to candidates.	✓	✓	✓
	Feedback invited from candidates.	✓	✓	✓
	Use of panel interviews.	✓	✓	✓
	Senior management, peers, subordinates, service providers and recipients involved in R&S process.	✗	✓	✓
• Front-loaded investment model	Tailor-made R&S exercises.	✗	✓	✓
	Multi-stakeholder involvement.	✗	✓	✓
	Adequate resourcing of R&S in terms of time/budget.	✗	✗	✓
	Rigorous evaluation.	✓	✓	✓
	R&S processes responsive to outputs from evaluation.	✗	✗	✓

reported that strategic considerations were the starting point for the process. The flow chart, depicting the recruitment of a Building Control Manager to a District Council, revealed that "restructuring of the entire planning department" interacted with the "revised objectives" of "efficiency and customer service" to drive the remainder of the recruitment and selection process. What was not made clear was the level at which these strategic considerations were initiated. Here it is assumed that changes to over-arching corporate strategy were driving strategic change at the departmental level. It is of course possible that the department was acting independently and forging its own strategic direction in which case strategy formulation was operating at the functional rather than the corporate level (Purcell, 1989).

In three further cases corporate strategy appeared as one of a number of factors which were informing the need analysis stage of the recruitment and selection process. For example, in one instance the stage "Determine need to refill?" was informed by "Previous roles/post holders; realignment of duties/reporting; *organisation strategy*". In another, "Job analysis" was conducted around a number of "policies (*corporate*, staffing, legal, grading)".

In total, then, only four flow charts (2 per cent) made any explicit reference to corporate strategy. However, because corporate strategy lies at the heart of HRP, it is possible that some respondents regard the two as synonymous, where reference to the latter provides proxy evidence of the former.

Primary Features: Human Resource Planning
Within the conceptual framework, HRP was interpreted as the vehicle for translating corporate plans into staffing requirements and, as such, its role within

the recruitment and selection process may be more transparent than that of corporate strategy. It was certainly more evident in the flow charts, where 10 respondents (6 per cent), none of whom had mentioned corporate strategy, incorporated HRP as an element in their flow chart. In 6 of these (3 per cent), respondents referred to HRP explicitly as the generator of the need to recruit. In the other cases the reference was more tangential but has been interpreted here as representing HRP. For example, one respondent referred to "High level plan identifies needs" whereas another simply referred to "Headcount analysis".

Table 6.2 summarises the extent to which these primary features were found to be informing an organisation's analysis of its recruitment and selection requirements and initiating the whole process. Taken together only 14 respondents (8 per cent) made any reference to either strategic planning or HRP, and this interpretation was arguably generous in 50 per cent of these cases. These primary features represented the starting point of the recruitment and selection process in only 10 flow charts (6 per cent). Conversely, the overwhelming majority of flow charts commenced with the release or notification of a vacancy (62 per cent). This was normally expressed in terms such as "vacancy", "vacancy arises" or "notification of vacancy" (36 per cent).

Table 6.2 Inputs Used by Organisations to Analyse their Recruitment and Selection Requirements
(no. of respondents = flow chart entries)

Analysing Organisational Requirements	No. of respondents n=180	%	Starting point of R&S process	%
Strategic planning	4	2	1	1
Human resource planning (HRP)	10	6	9	5
Needs analysis	43	24	25	14
HRP and/or needs analysis	51	28	34	19
Analysing Job Requirements				
Job analysis	28	16	14	8
Needs analysis	43	24	25	14
Job analysis and/or needs analysis	61	34	39	22
Job description	168	93	N/a	N/a
Person specification	145	81	N/a	N/a

Another cluster of flow charts commenced further into the traditional recruitment and selection process at a point around which the vacancy was advertised (8 per cent). In one case the starting point was the receipt of an unsolicited application and in another a response to the job advertisement itself. Taken together with the previous category (vacancy release) it would appear that in some 70 per cent of cases it is the vacant position that initiates the recruitment and selection process without any prior strategic planning, HRP or definition of need.

In total 61 respondents (34 per cent) incorporated analysis of need and/or job analysis into their flow chart and where some type of need analysis was indicated it appeared to be predominantly associated with identifying the requirements of the immediate vacancy. It is, of course, possible that in some of these cases, needs analysis was shaped by wider, corporate-level planning. However, in only two cases was there reference to such planning. In one, job analysis was informed by organisation "policies (corporate, staffing, legal, grading)", whilst in the other, "headcount analysis" was used to determine the existence and nature of the vacancy.

Primary Features: Long-term Perspective
The final primary feature identified against SR&S was its long-term focus. The self-reporting mechanism adopted did not allow this feature to be specifically analysed. However, the foregoing analysis would suggest that the focus is predominantly short term with the emphasis on meeting the immediate needs of a vacancy at a highly localised level. There was very little evidence of strategic planning or HRP and little overt evidence that any needs analysis was being driven by corporate concerns. Indeed, overall the flow charts are very reminiscent of those found in standard HR texts depicting the traditional variant of recruitment and selection. This position is reinforced by findings related to the secondary features of SR&S that follow.

Secondary Features: Rigorous Evaluation
The analytical framework developed to capture the flow–chart data covered various types of evaluation, which could be broadly classified as relating to either outcomes of the recruitment and selection process or elements of the process itself. Table 6.3 summarises the position and what will be immediately apparent is the limited extent of any reported evaluation. Only 16 respondents (9 per cent) appeared to be conducting any form of evaluation and in no case was the strategic contribution of recruitment and selection evaluated. In terms of outcomes, evaluation was concentrated around a review of job performance following appointment (5 per cent of respondents) and, for process evaluation, was directed at recruitment methods (2 per cent), selection methods (1 per cent) or the whole process (3 per cent).

Secondary Features: Sophisticated Selection
At one level the use of more sophisticated approaches to selection anticipates the use of highly reliable and valid selection methods. At another it suggests the use of a wider diversity of methods in order to assess candidates against the more demanding person specifications produced by strategically driven recruitment and selection practice. Findings, however, suggest that selection methods are rarely evaluated to assess their reliability and validity (see Table 6.3) and that, as summarised in Table 6.4, reliance on the classic trio of short listing, interviewing and references (Cook, 1998) still predominates selection practice. Virtually all respondents indicated that their organisations used interviewing (99 per cent)

Table 6.3 Evaluation of Recruitment and Selection Outcomes and Processes

(no. of respondents = flow chart entries)

	No. of respondents* n=180	%
Post-Selection Evaluation of R&S Outcomes		
Candidate satisfaction	1	1
Review of candidate job performance post-appointment	9	5
Organisational or strategic contribution	0	0
Rejected candidates	0	0
Budget review	2	1
Total conducting some evaluation of R&S outcomes	12	7
Post-Selection Evaluation of R&S Processes		
Planning phase	0	0
Recruitment methods	3	2
Selection methods	2	1
R & S process	5	3
Total conducting some evaluation of R&S processes	9	5
Total Conducting Some Evaluation (including the 2 budget reviews)	16	9

Figures do not necessarily total because of multiple responses.

and short-listing (92 per cent) methods to select staff, with almost half indicating the use of references (49 per cent). In contrast 41 (23 per cent) used some form of testing and 16 (9 per cent) one or more selection methods from a cluster comprising group exercises, work sampling, presentations or a written task. A further 17 flow charts (9 per cent) indicated the use of assessment centres which would obviously incorporate an array of these selection methods. In total, 33 per cent of flow charts depicted the use of assessment centres and/or psychometric/personality testing and/or group exercises, work sampling etc. To put it another way, in two-thirds of reported cases selection did not progress beyond the use of the classic trio.

Table 6.4 Selection Methods Identified by Respondents

(no. of respondents = flow chart entries)

Selection methods	No. of respondents n=180	%
Short listing		
By application form/CV	152	84
By interview	23	13
By testing	5	3
Total using one or more method of short listing	165	92
Nil response	15	8
Interviewing		
Simply stated "interview"	66	37
1 to 1	25	14
2 to 1	24	13

Panel	33	18
Sequential	44	24
Total using interviews[a]	**174** (n=176)	99
Testing		
Psychometric	23	13
Personality	7	4
Ability/attainment	12	7
Other/not specified	10	6
Assessment centres	17	9
Total using one or more types of testing	41	23
Total testing and/or using assessment centres	58	32
References		
Prior to selection	16	9
Post-selection: pre-offer	18	10
Post-offer	55	31
Total using references[b]	**88**	**49**
Other selection methods		
Group exercise	4	2
Work sampling	4	2
Presentations	8	4
Written task	1	1
Total using one or more of the above methods	16	9
Medical	25	14

a *Excluding two respondents using 'internal selection' and two where selection methods were not stated.*
b *One respondent indicated two categories.*

Secondary Features: Multi–Stakeholder Involvement

Within the strategic framework multi-stakeholder involvement pointed to due weighting being given to the interests of potential applicants and candidates in a genuine two–way process as well as the active involvement in the recruitment and selection process of other stakeholders significantly affected by its outcomes. The method of data collection is not particularly suited to the extraction of detailed information on stakeholder involvement in the recruitment and selection process. In retrospect, it would have been useful to ask respondents to assign responsibilities to the elements depicted in their flow charts, although some respondents provided this data voluntarily. Where this occurred, it pointed to three participating groups: senior management involvement in vacancy authorisation; and HR practitioner and line management involvement in recruitment and selection activities to varying degrees of responsibility. In addition, flow charts pointed to the use of panel interviews (18 per cent) where more extensive stakeholder involvement might be expected. Elsewhere, the flow