

MOCK INTERVIEW SCRIPT (2)

Actors

I – Interviewer, Robin

M – Manager, Bruce Wayne aka Batman

S – Switchboard, Alfred

Scene

Interviewer is calling plant manager from CEP. Interview has already been scheduled and interviewer is calling at designated date/time to run the interview. The background information (i.e. informational letter, endorsement letters, press cuttings) has already been emailed along with an email/telephone reminder of the interview.

PART I – GREETING AND INTERVIEWEE DETAILS SECTION

(Interviewer calls, phone rings and someone answers the phone)

S: Good morning. Wayne Enterprises, Alfred speaking - how may I direct your call?

I: **Hello, my name is Robin and I'm calling from the LSE in England. May I be connected to Bruce Wayne please?**

S: I'm sorry, Bruce Wayne is out to lunch, please hold for his voicemail.

I: **Excuse me - I was wondering if you can please help me with something. I have a telephone appointment with Bruce Wayne right now and he confirmed through email that he would be available. Can you kindly check if he's in his office? I would really appreciate that.**

S: Please hold the line and I will check for you.

M: Hello? Bruce Wayne speaking.

I: **Good morning Mr. Wayne, this is Robin from the LSE ... We spoke yesterday afternoon and you asked me to call you back today.**

M: Right, right... I just saw your email and I have a few questions because I'm not certain that our company policy allows surveys.

I: **Sir, actually it's a piece of work endorsed by the Treasury. I assure you that its confidential and that your name or your company's name will not be mentioned anywhere.**



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M: That's fine but I cannot give you any financial information. Wayne Enterprises has very strict policies against that, hope you understand.

I: **No problem Bruce, I just have some questions regarding the management practices and the organizational structure.**

M: Ok that's fine.

I: **Very good. If you don't have any questions, shall we begin? And of course, feel free to stop me at any point if you do think of something.**

M: Right, let's start.

I: **Great. Just to double-check, your position is VP of Operations?**

M: Yes.

I: **And how long have you been in this post?**

M: 6 months.

I: **And how long have you been with the company?**

M: I started the automobile segment of my company 10 years ago.

I: **So you've just joined, great. And you're located in Gotham City, correct? Could you tell me what county that's in?**

M: No, we've moved to Orange County, California. Gotham City was a bit dark for me so I wanted to move to sunny California. Also being close to Hollywood places us very close to some of our key customers. Believe it or not, there's a big demand amongst actors for the Batmobile. Even though it's illegal to use many of the features on the freeway, they like to keep it in their garage as a collector's item.

I: **And how many major competitors do you have?**

M: Well we have the leading automotive companies of the world but since nobody can replicate the Batmobile, I think we're very unique – I thought you would know that from our name.

PART II – MANAGEMENT SECTION

1. Introduction of modern (lean) manufacturing techniques

I: Of course. Actually can you tell me a bit about your production process please.

M: Well we manufacture the Batmobile for certain high end clients as I mentioned. Like I told you when we started, we have very strict confidentiality practices here so I cannot disclose any names.

I: Could you tell me a bit about how the Batmobile is actually produced?

M: Well... it's a standard automotive demand pull system. We have a lot of preassembled parts that come in from Mexico, China, and some other specialized products that arrive from around the world. Just briefly, we work on assembling the engine which gets passed through to body assembly and finally we apply the finishing and polish. It's a very good manufacturing system that we have here and that's why our products are the best in the world.

I: What kinds of lean (modern) manufacturing techniques have you introduced?

M: We are just starting on this, and that's the reason why I am here. These guys had no idea about lean before me. I have started working here six months ago and let me tell you that you can already see a difference on the shopfloor, we are much more efficient!

I: Can you give me an example of the changes that you've introduced?

M: Well, the main thing has been the change from batch production to leveled production. When I first got here you could see parts of Batmobiles all lying around the shopfloor! An engine there, doors there, a real mess... Nobody really cared about getting the different lines of production working together, and this is what I am pushing on now. It took a while, but now the different lines are much more balanced and inventory levels have decreased dramatically. Actually, the other the thing that has gone really well is our removal of bottlenecks. There's no longer a holdup in the line when we apply our special touch to the hand stitched seats. I'm quite happy with all of the changes that we've put in place.

2. Rationale for lean manufacturing introduction

I: Right, and why did you introduce these changes?

M: Well you know, all my friends at the flying club are really obsessed by lean and I was gradually brought into it. They are pretty smart guys and they go regularly to the "Lean



for all” exhibition, so I am pretty confident they are giving me the right advice. Peter Parker and my other Superfriends generally don’t give bad advice and are on top of getting rid of the evil processes that bog down the world.

I: And is there any other reason to introduce lean manufacturing beyond your friends’ advice?

M: The advice was the excuse, but as time goes by I can see why they were so happy about it. That’s the only way to face competition, and now that the Japanese have introduced the DeLorean Supreme time travel has been made incredibly efficient, so we need to make a big effort to survive.

3. Process documentation

I: Just changing the subject a bit, could you please tell how you usually deal with problems relative to the production process?

M: Well, right now problems are more or less solved as they arise. I am trying to introduce some changes and asked the guys to report weekly on the status of the machine to try and prevent possible problems. I have a good idea of where I want us to be and we definitely haven’t made it there.

I: What do you think needs to be improved in this process?

M: I don’t have time now to go too much in detail, but I think we are still too passive in spotting potential problems and proposing possible improvements. We have a box where people can anonymously drop their suggestions, but no one really uses it. I have a lot to do on that.

4. Performance tracking

I: Mr Wayne, what kind of KPI’s do you use to track performance?

M: The company has loads of KPI’s, but I use mainly production and inventories, and on time delivery. Then of course we also keep track of sales.

I: How frequently do you measure these KPI’s?

M: I like to monitor production very closely, so I tend to look at my KPI’s on a daily basis. I can log into the plant system from home, so sometimes I have 2/3 checks per day, my wife Vicki is not so happy about it, but the world doesn’t stop working so I can’t afford to either.

I: And who gets to see this KPI data beside you?



M: I want the data to be as public as possible, so the production data are posted every day on each machine and we also have a summary of inventories and deliveries posted weekly just behind the door of my office. I'm not too heavy handed in my approach, but I do walk through the plant and talk to my staff to make sure that everyone has taken note of the KPI's.

5. Review of Performance

I: And how do you review your performance?

M: It depends. What do you mean by performance? I have different meetings for different KPI's, production, deliveries, sales...

I: For example, how do you review your production performance?

M: Well, that is something that I do mainly with Bob and Bill, who are responsible for the 5 production lines. I meet them once a week and we talk about what we've achieved so far. Usually we look at the data, discuss it for an hour or so, draw conclusions and then... we're back to work.

I: What kind of conclusions would you highlight?

M: Well... we would try to make sure that we develop a detailed course of action for the plan, which usually involves breaking the action down into 3 key steps, which are prioritized by order of importance. From there we can highlight the exact steps that we want to take and to make sure we drive to the root cause of our problems.

I: And what about the other KPI's?

M: For sales and on time deliveries I meet monthly with my boss and the business development manager – Mr Jolly. We have an agenda that we usually follow quite closely. Everybody gets to express their views on the current state of the business and possible ways to improve sales.

I: Who gets to see the results of these meetings?

M: Again, this depends on the meeting, I share the result of my production meetings with all the guys on the shopfloor; since we have an excellent IT department here, we can post this information on the network and everyone can log in and see it. The summaries of the sales meetings aren't really shared by all, they're only for the senior management.

6. Performance Dialogue

I: And what type of feedback do you get in these meetings?

M: The production meetings are useful, Bob and Bill know that I want to have a full picture on the production process, and we all try to make the most out of the meeting, so we all try to express our view as clearly as possible. Like I said earlier we highlight the consequences that we want to sort out in these meetings and give them an importance rating. This allows us to communicate clearly and effectively with each other. But, the sales meetings are quite frankly a bit useless in terms of feedback, we do very different things and I don't see how I could possibly learn something on production from Mr. Jolly.

I: Do you find that you generally have enough data during the meetings?

M: I think we are just about fine. Potentially we could do much better on this side. We do have data, but it is difficult to interpret and sometimes some of the managers struggle to use it efficiently. We're working with our IT department to set up a more effective monitoring system so that we can generate relevant and concise data.

7. Consequence Management

I: And suppose you'd find a problem in your production process. How would you go about fixing it?

M: Well after we have our 3 key points that we need to address, we go about assigning the appropriate roles to the workers. We are quite good at assigning the correct jobs to the workers and we see results on this.

I: Could you give me an example of this?

M: Last week we noticed that we were having some troubles in the final part of the line producing the invisible shield for the batmobile. We had a brainstorming session in our weekly meeting, saw that our suppliers in Argentina were delivering a slightly modified version of the paint, so we identified a few areas in the paint application stage that would fix the problem. Now we're back to producing an even quality invisibility shield so that all of the actors can escape the paparazzi without notice.

I: And what happens if some parts of the business show repeated failures?

M: We don't have this kind of problem here.



8. Type of targets

I: What types of targets are set for the plant?

M: I think you asked about this before. We follow sales, production, inventories and deliveries, the usual stuff...

I: Great, and what about the rest of the company?

M: The picture gets a bit more complicated here. They also target sales and deliveries, but the commercial side of the business has also different targets. I know Mr. Jolly also follows market share and he really has to be sure that customers are happy. But I don't have much to do with this, I am in charge of production and that's where all my energies are focused.

I: Can you tell me about your non-financial goals.

M: Yes, we put a lot of emphasis on safety in the workplace and we're in the process of rolling out an updated recycling plan.

9. Interconnection of targets

I: What is the motivation behind your goals?

M: Customer satisfaction and sales. The CEO that's in place also wants to make sure that our goals are based in delivering some kind of value to the owners of the company.

I: And how is this goal cascaded down to the individual workers?

M: Well, every year each of the managers receives a personalised file with a clear plan on what they're supposed to achieve in the following year. Then each manager has to review the file and have a joint meeting with their workers to pass on the file and share information. In this way every worker knows how their work feeds into the big picture and all the targets are fully consistent.

10. Time horizon

I: What kind of time scale are you looking at with your targets?

M: We have annual, quarterly and monthly goals.

I: Which goals receive the most emphasis?



M: I have to say we are pretty much tuned on the annual goals. Quarterly and monthly goals are important but not as much.

I: Are the long term and short term goals set independently?

M: No, they are all linked.

I: Could you meet all your short term goals but miss your long term goals?

M: Not really, because we're so focused on the annual target. What might happen is that we skip the quarterly target, but then we do our best to improve the performance in the following quarter. So, if anything I would say it's the other way around, you could miss the short term goals but would almost surely hit the long term goals.

11. Goals are stretching

I: How tough are your targets?

M: Tough but realistic

I: Do you feel pushed by your targets?

M: Yes

I: On average, how often would you say that you meet your targets?

M: We meet them 80% of the time..

I: Do you feel that on targets all groups receive the same degree of difficulty?

M: That's what I'd like to think, but I am not sure this is true. Here in production we have quite a big responsibility. I am not so sure that Mr Jolly is working as hard, he always has a very big smile on his face and seems quite relaxed...

12. Clarity of Goals

I: Just changing the subject a bit, Mr Wayne, can you tell me - how do people know about their own performance compared to other people's performance?

M: They have a very good idea of how well they are doing, and having their KPI's posted on the machines helps a lot. They know every day how much they've produced and it does not take a lot of effort to have a look at the others' performance if they're interested to know.

I: Does anyone complain that the targets are too complex?

M: No, not really (with a nervous tone)



13. Instilling a talent mindset

I: Great, and thanks for bearing with me Mr. Wayne, I have a few more questions for you and we should be finished soon. Can you please tell me how senior managers show that attracting and developing talent is a top priority?

M: We want talented people, that's for sure. There's no way you can survive without talent and down here we all very much aware of it. And given the history of Wayne Enterprises we know how to attract talent. We have meeting to figure out what areas of the firm need to improve their general talent level, and address the situation there.

I: Do senior managers get any rewards for bringing in and keeping talented people in the company?

M: Yes, the managers are rewarded. In general we have a contest every year to see who bring the most talented people as judged by our HR department. We are definitely motivated to get talented guys in our company.

14. Building a high performance culture

I: How does your appraisal system work? Tell me about the most recent round.

M: The appraisal is very informal. I've just started as VP of Operations, so I still have to run through it, but I've been told by the other managers that it is not a big deal.

I: Are there any non-financial rewards for top-performers?

M: The best manager of the year gets to use the batmobile for three months. I'm really counting on that!

I: How does the bonus system work?

M: I will have a bonus if I keep the targets stated on my personal file. I also get a bonus based on my team performance, but this is not much. Then there is the company bonus, not much but everybody in the company gets that.

MANAGERS BONUS

I: What is your bonus as a percentage of salary?

M: In total I'd say, 20%.

I: And if you were to break this down into your individual performance, team performance and company performance?

M: Personal performance 80%, team performance 15% and company performance 5%.

15. Making room for talent

I: Ok, if you had a worker who could not do his job, what would you do? Could you give me a recent example?



M: What can you do? Not much, really. There's this guy that does not do much. I've given him a warning, but I can't really fire him because he has already threatened lawsuits.. we just have to put him in places where he does the least damage.

I: And how long would underperformance be tolerated?

M: As I said, we don't like to tolerate this and we know pretty soon if somebody is no good. But, like I said we've had some problems firing people so we've got to stick with what we have, sometimes for a long time. Ideally these problems wouldn't be tolerated for longer than 3 months, but we do what we can.

16. Developing talent

I: Tell me about your promotion system please.

M: We have an informal promotion system. What happens is that managers are encouraged to recommend top performers for promotions. When there is an opening, the managers are asked to submit recommendations and then we go through this list and pick out a few individuals. Then, we speak to them – an informal interview if you will – and then decide who the best person is. We try to promote from within the company, it's important to us that they are a part of Wayne Enterprises.

I: What about poor performers? What happens with them? Are there any examples you can think of?

M: Poor performers get a verbal warning followed by the written warning, and then the final stage is termination. We move them around to different positions to see if that helps.

I: Are there any examples you can think of?

M: I'm really running short on time here, do you really need an example? How much longer is this going to take?

I: If you could, that would be very helpful. Otherwise, I just have a few more questions and I need about 10 minutes more. Thank you again for helping me.

M: Jennifer was just promoted to assistant plant manager last year and 2 months into it, we saw that she was having a hard time keeping up with the workload. So we had a meeting with her and realized that while she was excellent with the technical stuff, she didn't know how to manage more than a very small group of people. Normally we might have moved her to another position but in this instance, we really needed someone to fill that position. So we sent her to a few additional training seminars and it turned out that she was just shy, and was able to improve on this.

I: How would you identify and develop your star performers?

M: If we see that someone demonstrates a particular interest in something or is excelling at a task, we try to match them up with a senior person in the plant for some training. It's kind of an informal mentoring program.

I: So if two people joined the company 5 years ago, and one was much better than the other, would he/she be promoted faster?



M: Yes, we only promote based on performance.

17. Creating a distinctive employee value

I: What makes it distinctive to work at your company as opposed to your competitors?

M: Well it's the name of the company as you know. There are few people in this world who wouldn't want to work for Wayne Enterprises. Plus, we have a good benefits package.

I: If you were trying to sell your firm to me, how would you do this?

M: Well as you know, the Batmobile is one of the world's most respected automobiles and to be a part of that production team, is quite special indeed. We have access to the latest technologies that our competitors just can't match.

18. Retaining talent

I: Thanks for that, and the last management related question is: If you had a star performer who wanted to leave, what would the company do?

M: We would try and talk them into it, but at the end of the day – we don't believe in offering more money, that's against my principles.

I: Could you give me an example of a star performer being persuaded to stay after wanting to leave?

M: Robin, I just don't have time to give you all these examples... perhaps you can send me an email with the rest of your questions and I'll get back to you on those.

I: Mr. Wayne, I do apologize as we're running a bit late. If you could bear with me for just 5 minutes, I have some very short organizational questions.

M: Very well, keep it short please.

I: Thank you.

PART III – ORGANIZATION SECTION

I: How many people are there in the firm?

M: About 250.

I: Great. Let's talk quickly about firm hierarchy. Who does the shop floor worker report to?

M: Their team supervisor.

I: And who does the team supervisor report to?

M: The line manager.

I: And the batch manager?

M: The assistant plant manager – Jennifer.

I: And who does she report to?



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M: The plant manager.

I: And the plant manager?

M: Me.

I: Great, and then you report to the CEO.

M: That's correct.

I: Great, thank you for that. So there are 5 levels between the CEO and shop floor.

M: Yes.

I: Have these levels changed in the last 3 years?

M: No.

I: Just to double check, there are 4 levels between you and the shop floor?

M: That's right.

I: And you mentioned that there are 250 people in the company. How many people are there in your plant?

M: 200

I: How many people directly report to you?

M: 20

I: And how much do the managers decide how tasks are allocated across workers in their teams?

M: It's all handled by management.

I: Who decides the pace of work on the shop floor?

M: Also the managers.

I: Great, just a few more questions – these are very short. In terms of hiring, if you want to hire a full time shop floor worker, what sort of agreement do you need from CHQ?

M: I don't need an agreement, its up to me who to hire.

I: And what is the largest capital investment your plant can make without prior authorization from CHQ?

M: No more than \$10,000.

I: What about decisions taken on new product development? Is that done at CHQ or in the plant?

M: Headquarters but we're all in the same complex – they're just next door.

I: How much of the sales and marketing is carried out in the plant?

M: Sales and marketing departments are at headquarters but often their teams go to the factory to consult with operations.



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I: How many production sites are there in total?

M: Just us.

I: And what percentage of the production is outsourced?

M: About 25 percent.

I: Just a couple of questions regarding ownership. Who owns the firm?

M: I do.

I: That's excellent. And you mentioned that you founded the firm?

M: Indeed.

I: Ok great, I'm sorry to have gone over my time. I'm on the last part here and just a couple HR questions and then we're finished.

M: I have to be in a meeting in 30 seconds.

I: What percent of the employees are managers?

M: 10%.

I: And what the percentage of managers who have a college degree?

M: About 75%.

I: Is that the same also for non-managers and college degrees?

M: About 50%.

I: And what percent of employees have left your plant in the last 12 months.

M: Zero.

I: And do you have union members?

M: No.

I: Roughly how many times bigger is the CEO's salary than a shop floor worker? Two times? Ten times?

M: About ten.

I: Ok final question here, thanks again for waiting. Ignoring yourself, how well managed do you think the rest of the company is on a 1-10 scale? 1 being poor and 10 being very high.

M: 8

I: And how about in terms of operations management?

M: 8

I: And finally, what about people management.

M: 10



I: Excellent. Thank you so much Mr. Wayne, you've been very helpful. May I email you a copy of this report when its finished in a few months?

M: Sure, that would be good. My email address is batman@wayne.com

I: Thanks again for your time and have a nice day.

M: Goodbye.