



## Case study: Ericsson Turkey

### An HR department uses TOEIC scores to set criteria for recruitment, and to evaluate language skills of employees

#### Challenge

Significant changes in the global telecommunication and IT industries have facilitated access to rapid and continuous information. A company that is dependant on information in the local language will only have access to incomplete and often, outdated information. To sustain its tradition of excellent customer service and efficient functioning, Ericsson Turkey needs up-to-date information, sometimes available only in English. Hence, a good understanding of English is essential for each and every Ericsson Turkey employee. This need for good English skills, led to Ericsson Turkey's resolve to build employees' real English language skills and to help them fulfill work requirements.

#### Solution

In 2003, Ericsson Turkey decided to evaluate the efficacy of the Test of English for International Communication™ (TOEIC®). In collaboration with the TOEIC representative in Turkey, Standart Test Eğitim Hizmetleri (STE), a benchmarking study was conducted. All Ericsson employees, from the general director to the technicians, participated in this study. The goal was to understand the overall English skill level within the company, and then use those indicators in future recruitment, and other, decisions. The first test administration for 250 employees was held in a university test centre, followed by consecutive sessions under the supervision of STE for employees who had missed the first administration. For the participants' convenience these latter sessions were held on Ericsson's premises.

To ensure the English language competency of Ericsson Turkey employees, the company set English Preferable Scores for each position, and different activities. A potential candidate and/or jobholder would need to meet his/her preferable score, and The TOEIC test would be used to measure employees' English skills.

Currently Ericsson requires all of its short-listed applicants (and when needed, employees), to take the TOEIC test before they go further in the hiring process or advance in their career-paths. To ease its workload, Ericsson's Human Resources department asks the applicants to take the test at a TOEIC test centre rather than within the company. The test-takers are contacted by STE for arrangements and the test administered to them. The results are then quickly reported to Ericsson HR officers, in many cases within hours after the test session.

#### Results

With the benchmarking study, Ericsson Turkey was able to have a precise snapshot of the English skill levels within the company, and compare them across different positions.

If employees have a TOEIC score below 650 points, and if English skills are critical for their job requirements, Ericsson supports them by arranging for language training courses. The progress of these individuals is also closely followed by their managers.

Moreover, a TOEIC score plays an important role in identifying potential managers, setting required competence levels for each position when promotions are considered, and in identifying employees to participate in training in an English-language setting.