

The Value of Psychometrics or “How To Cut Costs and Reduce The Risks Of Recruitment!”

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In a world devoted to impression management and “spin” it is not surprising that the task of identifying the best candidate for a job role is becoming an increasingly difficult challenge for even the most sophisticated of employers.

From an early age, interview candidates are coached into presenting their “best self” at interview, perhaps gaining holiday work or internships to gain valuable work experience, about which they can talk at interview and enhance their cv. This continues as working life progresses and becomes more polished and more convincing to the employer recruitment panel. Some candidates will read about interview techniques, what questions to expect, questions to ask to make an impression and those with a budget may hire an Executive Job Coach to refine the CV and coach them through the job application and interview process. Whilst these are all really positive actions, perhaps they overlook these vital factors, ie: is the candidate the best candidate for the job? Is the job the right one for the candidate and how can an employer recruitment panel make that judgement effectively?

An equally concerning factor, is the cost of appointing a candidate to a role to which they appear to be suited but which is not a good fit for their skills and abilities? In the first instance the recruitment process is expensive, both in terms of time and financial resources. There is a cost to induction and training candidates in the systems and processes of any organisation. However, if the candidate is not equipped with suitable skills for the job role, this can be damaging for everyone involved. If a Manager is appointed with excellent technical abilities but poor leadership skills, it will be a matter of time before this is reflected in the morale and performance of their team. In serious cases this will impact on recruitment and retention within the department and ultimately it will affect the delivery of business objectives and impact on the customer.

In addition, there is a high cost to be paid by the Executive who gains a job which is not a good match for their abilities. This can become a highly stressful position which in itself can lead to absence due to depression and illness. The situation becomes more costly to try and retrieve and the company, the individual, their team and ultimately their customers become entangled in a corrosive cycle. These situations can be avoided through the use of psychometric assessment.



A robust psychometric assessment tool such as a Saville Wave Report or Saville Aptitude assessment will reduce the risk involved in any senior appointment. The Saville Wave model is the market leader in psychometric assessment. It measures behaviour at work in more detail than any other tool, examining 108 behaviours at the most granular level. It has the ability to measure motive and talent and was recently awarded 27/30 stars by the British Psychological Society which is the highest ever rating bestowed by the BPS on a psychometric assessment. In a study which compared Wave to other products on the market, Wave was shown to be the most valid.

The Wave model offers a variety of assessments tailored to assist the employer with their specific recruitment requirements. For a detailed deep dive analysis, the Expert Report examines 108 behavioural facets organised under four main Clusters of “Thought, Influence, Adaptability and Delivery”. The report also highlights where a candidate projects motive and talent splits which can provide a useful platform for further discussion at interview. In addition, Ipsative and Normative splits are also explored and this in essence provides specific information where a candidate has answered particular questions from a greater or less self-critical perspective.

A further benefit of the Wave Model and in particular the Expert Report, is the ability to predict the candidate’s greater and lesser potential around the 4 main clusters of “Solving Problems, Influencing people, Adapting Approaches and Delivering Results”. The predicted Culture and Environment Fit also explores the environment in which the candidate is most likely to perform well and the environment in which they will struggle to deliver at their best.

Whilst psychometric reports may be triggered for the purpose of recruitment, they also provide a comprehensive benchmark for the future development of the successful candidate. The information contained within the report is usually valid for at least 12 months and possibly a maximum of 24 months, dependent on the circumstances, giving both the employer and candidate a head-start on the formation of a development plan.

Another popular report based on the Wave model is the Leadership Report. This report provides a “Leader Base Profile which is a summary of the potential of the candidate in six key aspects of leadership, also providing a broad overview of the candidate’s potential to lead.

The Leader Base Profile focuses on Demonstrating Capability (Task), Working Together (People) and Promoting Change (Growth). In addition, the full report produces a Leadership Styles Profile for the candidate which consists of 24 leadership styles arranged under the over-arching Wave model clusters of Professional, People, and Pioneering. The report also explores talent and motive splits and normative and Ipsative splits, all of which provide useful insights into candidate behaviours and are a basis for further exploration at interview.

A key element of this report is the predicted situational leadership effectiveness summary which indicates the top six situations in which the candidate is likely to be an effective leader, together with the bottom six situations to which the candidate’s leadership style will be less suited.



Whilst the Savile Wave personality profiles examine behaviours, motivations and potential, the Savile suite of aptitude assessments examine the candidate's intellectual capability to deliver the required job role.

A typical test used for Directors, Senior Managers and professionals, would be the Swift Executive Aptitude combination test which would examine verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning and abstract reasoning in one short 18 minute online session. The test results are linked to the Senior Managers and Executive comparison group and the results are reported accordingly. There are of course many different test levels available designed specifically for technical, commercial, operational, customer service, administration or apprenticeship roles. All tests are however available with online access and can be delivered either supervised or unsupervised as required by the employer.

So, what are the key benefits of using psychometric assessment? They are as follows:

1. Psychometric assessment is objective, unbiased and a fair method of screening candidates for prospective job roles.
2. Psychometric assessments overcome the issue of impression management which can last up to 6 months in a new job.
3. The assessments can all be conducted online either supervised or unsupervised.
4. Psychometrics reduce the risk and associated costs of selection errors.
5. Employers can establish whether the candidate really has the skills and competencies which are key to the job role in addition to exploring their motivation to deliver.
6. An employer can examine not just the raw talent which is presenting but the future potential of the candidate, thereby assisting in succession planning and candidate development.
7. The Environmental Fit aspect of the Wave model, enables an employer to assess whether the company culture is one in which the candidate will thrive or struggle to deliver.
8. Psychometric reports provide insights for probing at interview which would not be available elsewhere.
9. Large numbers of candidates can be screened online quickly and cost effectively enabling candidates with the required abilities to be identified and recruited swiftly.
10. Psychometric report results can be aligned with specific company values and job competencies as required by the client.

If you would like to know more about the many different individual and team psychometric assessments available please do not hesitate to contact Stella Rose-Williams at The Leadership Artisan, on 01452 814334, 0784 3972604 or smrw1@leadership-artisan.co.uk.

