

Psychometric assessments in personnel adaptation processes

Who do we take? Who fits what? How do we develop personnel? To answer the questions more and more recruitment managers utilize the advantages of psychometric assessment.

I. What are psychometric assessments and what are their advantages?

Psychometric assessments are theory based selection and development tools that make conclusions as to the abilities and personality of the one tested possible. The advantages are obvious: Scientific validation and reliability assessment certify good procedure parameters that lie far above those of a normal interview or an assessment centre - besides distinctive cost and time advantages. If you also take into consideration the cost that arises due to employing the wrong people and having to dismiss these, one thing quickly becomes clear: Soundly developed psychometric assessments offer an excellent relation of expense and proceeds. A further advantage: In good assessments, taking into consideration the defined processes, you stay on the safe side of the much-debated DIN33430.

The psychometric assessment should not fundamentally replace the one to one conversation. Psychometric assessments are strongly bound to the classical procedures and are only serious if the results are discussed with the applicant and therein become sounder.

II. What should a recruiter consider when choosing psychometric assessment?

First of all the recruiter must ask himself: do I need a selection tool or a development tool?

Selection tools are well known in recruitment. With these it is about selecting an applicant and evaluating whether the applicant and his skills meet the criteria of the vacancy. What is being tested here is the "maximum behaviour" similar to a speed or strength test on a sportsman. How fast can a person organize? How good are his analytical skills?

Development tools show – symbolically speaking – the skeleton that supports behaviour. They make it possible to understand the preferences in a person that determine the visible behaviour. In a consulting or coaching situation in personnel adaptation processes working with a development tool can be a valuable asset. It does not provide a final assessment, rather it points to individual development goals and also individual ways to develop these.

Differentiating these might seem a little confusing on first sight but it spotlights a basic question in personnel adaptation: Do I want to support a candidate to take on new tasks and get him well equipped to take the next step in his career? Or am I looking for a candidate who fulfils a specific requirement profile (key-keyhole).

The multitude of tools makes it difficult for the recruiter to choose; besides the

quality of these might be scientifically dubious. Over and above this some tools claim to cover both areas – selection and development. This only works to a certain extent. To set an example we would like to introduce two tools that have been proven in practical application as well as in their theoretical backup.

III. For personnel selection: Jobfidence

Jobfidence® is a good example of a selection tool. It measures achievement prerequisites which are closely connected with professional success. Jobfidence® is used above all in the selection of candidates for management, specialist and sales positions.

The procedure was constructed for the competition situation, in which candidates naturally want to present themselves in the best possible light and it cannot be manipulated by socially desirable answers. It is therefore eminently suitable for selection in competition situations and can be used for internal and external candidates. Jobfidence® measures two intelligence-related and four behaviour-related achievement prerequisites.

1. Intelligence-related achievement prerequisites

Adaptive Intelligence: This measures the mastery of common numerical and verbal skills. The measurement score is a predictor of performance in job fields where knowledge acquisition and/or communication play an important role.

Analytical Intelligence: Analytical reasoning and combinative thinking are measured as structured processing capacity – how well can someone recognise abstract relations and think and work conceptually?

2. Behaviour-related achievement prerequisites

Flexibility: This measures the readiness to overcome personal habits and prejudices in decision-making processes. This measurement predicts how well someone can adjust to binding rule structures on the one hand and different situations and people on the other.

Motivation to perform: The individual motivation which activates willingness to perform is measured. Is the candidate motivated more by long-term satisfactory processes or more by short-term attainable results?

Stress stability: This measures the ability to perform and the conflict-solving ability in socially stressful contact and leadership-defined situations.

Persistence in pursuing goals: The individual response tendency when confronted with unexpected difficulties which hinder goal-achievement is measured.

In practice Jobfidence® is combined with the definition of an ideal-profile for the target position (Position-Skyline®). The result (real-profile to ideal-profile) is presented graphically. The recommendation is visually supported with a traffic-light colour scale (red, yellow, green).

Jobfidence® reaches a hit-rate in the prediction of professional success which has otherwise only been reached by solidly constructed three-day assessment centres. To compare: ACs are commonly reported in academic literature to have an average validity coefficient of almost $r=.40$ whereas the validity indices for Jobfidence® lie between $r=.44$ and $r=.77$. The reliability indices for the individual measurement areas are also very high, lying between $r=.78$ and $r=.86$ (Cronbach Alpha, $N = 14,668$) and thus fulfilling or exceeding the requirements of the DIN 33430. Jobfidence® is legally secure. About 30,000 measurements are carried out every year in Germany alone.

IV. For Personnel development: Power Potential Profile

The Power Potential Profile is superior to traditional one-dimensional tools. It pictures three relevant areas, brings these into relation to each other and describes the development requirements (personality profile) as well as the momentary development status (competence status) of a person.

- 1. Personality profile:** Profile as per C.G. Jung, which is the globally most renowned and respectable personality typology. The individual preferences are measured in four tension fields:
 - Intro and Extraversion
 - Intuitive perception and perception based on facts
 - Feeling and Thinking based decision making
 - Open and structured work / life organisation

- 2. Authority-Responsibility-Power matrix:** Based on the transformational leadership model, this matrix shows how one perceives his individual authority and responsibility, how power is achieved and what form of influence he prefers.

- 3. Leadership competences and colleague or managerial feedback:** Here the self and external estimation of managerial competences, social competences and selected factors, for instance entrepreneurial thinking, are measured.

With this every personnel developer receives a full picture of typical behaviours that are embedded in a person. Development processes can be analysed and defined. The candidate receives an explicitly detailed and individual report (circa 30 pages) in combination with a 1-2 hour consultation. This discussion enables the dialog principle. This is about involving the colleague in a discussion about his personal development and conducting resource orientated development. To do this the individual strengths and traps are brought into the professional context and steps for development are agreed. When used correctly the Power-Potential-Profile adheres to the regulations of DIN 33430.

Further information and contact:
www.flow.de or
www.jobfidence.com or
www.powerpotentialprofile.com

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