



Driving shareholder value

Assessment Tests Contribute to Sound Selection

By Dr. Mickey Fineberg, Managing Partner, [Delta Consultants](#)

A note from Jim Geier, Human Capital Consulting Partners:

Bottom line-people are an organization's most valuable asset. Attract, hiring, and developing the right people will lead to business success. However, many times organizations struggle with, "How do I know if this person is right for the job?" As discussed during the PA BIO breakfast program, assessments are one way to assist you in answering this question. To explain how the assessment process works and its impact on increasing the success rate in hiring the right person, I have asked one of my strategic alliance partners, Dr. Mickey Fineberg of Delta Consultants to give his insights based on 30 years of selection testing.

When you're starting up, running, or participating in building an enterprise, there is nothing more rewarding (other than profitable growth) than knowing you have the people playing the right roles with the right skills, styles, and attitudes. Nothing is more frustrating than the realization that you've made the wrong choice. You might also be aware that with the wrong choice comes the penalty of two- to three-times base salary when considering training and orientation costs, lower productivity, missed opportunities, and the adverse impact on other people's morale and performance.

Increasing Success-Prediction Power

A well-conceived test program adds 25 to 35% success-prediction power to the other important elements of screening that include experiential review, interviewing, and referencing (including various background checks). In essence, assessment provides a dimension of critical information that cannot be determined reliably by the other pieces when it comes to identifying and selecting the best possible people.

Essentially, selecting great people is a combination of using one's mind and gut or applying both science and art. Experienced business psychologists optimize both and enable their clients to do as well. In this sense, a business psychologist understands assessments, their strengths and limitations, and how to interpret various test results (along with interview impressions) to determine how people will actually think and act in the role through which they are expected to contribute. And, the psychologist (or test consultant) will help clients avoid the pitfall of falling in love in the first ten minutes and spending the rest of their time defending their choice.

Checks and Balances

It is most effective to use multiple tests – aptitudes, preferences, values, attitudes, and styles – that complement and check and balance each other, along with psychologist involvement. A psychologist's involvement can include in-person or telephone interview and assessment, or depending on the job, client consultation (without candidate contact) on an assessment package that is selected based on job content or performance-based validity.

Single published assessments that are on the market, despite whether they purport to being tied to a job analysis, might be okay for ruling out already unacceptable people but are less potent at predicting those who will be truly successful from the standpoint of job competency and environmental or culture expectations. The lack of or limited involvement of a seasoned business psychologist also limits the capacity to predict a truly successful contribution as well as to provide proactive insight on how to maximize development and retention.

A comprehensive assessment package and the right level of psychologist involvement can enable the projection of future potential and the most opportunistic career track beyond the entry position. Assessment can enable sound promotional decisions and development strategies for those who are perceived as having succession potential or the capacity to take on bigger or broader responsibilities.