

## Profiling – Who should we be testing?

It is known that over 70% of large companies use some form of Psychometric Testing or other Profiling system as part of their recruitment process. They test for ability, personality, values and behaviour.

Surprisingly it is also known that most of these organisations only use these profiles to find out if the candidate matches an ideal profile that they have created for the desired role.

It is the experience of the Jedi that this is an expensive way to miss the fundamental benefits that profiling can produce.

- 1. Any profiling only tells you what raw material someone has. It is how you apply this raw material that determines success in any role**
- 2. Are the values and behaviours that are identified congruent with those of the business.**

It is the second of these that we will focus on in this article.

How many organisations profile the organisation as a whole. How can you assess an individual's ability to fit in if you do not know what they are fitting in to?

We have seen that when an organisation identifies its values and works to align all best practice to those values the success it enjoys is not only in recruitment but morale, productivity, staff retention, turnover and growth.

These organisations work in an atmosphere of trust and understanding and so find less time is wasted in overcoming conflict and so more time is spent on moving the business forward. They are also shown to have better relations with their customers and so enjoy an improved reputation in the market place – all of which leads to a higher market share.

Before we move on let's identify what values are: they are the underlying core that drives all behaviour. We could call them the principles by which we live, operate and communicate.

So what are the true values of your organisation? Many companies display their corporate values on their website and in other literature – but are these the true values or just what they want the world to believe?

When the true values do not match the published values, this will be demonstrated through the communication and management style of the organisation. Because values drive behaviour, it is the actions of the business that will speak much louder than the false, published values.

This leads to mistrust, suspicion, lack of cohesion and poor morale and performance. It is not only the employees of the organisation who will sense this misalignment in values the clients will too. In essence when you say you do things one way and yet actually do them another, confusion reigns and your actions will always speak louder than your words.

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Consider a company who publish one of their values as being committed to the continued development and welfare of all staff, yet spend very little time or money on training as it is considered unnecessary. They commit little time to listen to the considerations or feelings of their staff and continue to place high demands on employee time.

The staff see the irony. They trust the actions not the words, they learn to take no notice of what the business leaders say and just wait and see what happens . The business becomes slow to react to change, trust between employer and employee is low, frustrations mount and communication breaks down.

So before you test your candidates at recruitment to identify their values – make sure you know what the true values of your organisation are. Forget what you think they should be, take the time to find out what they really are. If you recruit the best candidate in the world and their values are not in alignment to the organisation – will they stay?

Values are just one element of the testing companies are doing, more popular are the "Personality Type". Identifying peoples motivators, how they react to certain situations, how they are best managed, and how they are likely to work and communicate.

Again do you know the personality types of the team they will join or the manager of that team or the organisation itself? If you don't what use is the information about the new candidate if you don't know how to fit it into your company?

Finding the right person to fit a particular role within a team depends as much on how they will fit the team as in how they will perform the role. Having an understanding of the team dynamic and the managers style is the only way to accurately measure the potential fit of a candidate.

By building a profile not only of the organisation but of the individuals in that organisation we have a powerful Human Resource tool. This information will indicate how managers manage, what development individuals require, we can predict how teams and individuals will react and behave under certain circumstances. Also who is best suited to what role in the organisation and what do you as the organisation need to do to keep them performing at their peak.

You can only achieve this if you have the full picture. That means understanding the individuals and the organisation in order to assess interaction between the two.

All organisations go through periods of change, these are often costly in terms of personnel and productivity. In an organisation built on trust, honest communication and understanding the impact of change is minimised. The staff work with the organisation to embrace change and make it successful. Also by understanding how individuals will react to change the correct communication, training and management can be put into place to manage the change rather than implement the change. When values are aligned the employees and the employer work together as one and the results, particularly during difficult times, are consistently outstanding.

As you increase your awareness so the individual awareness will grow and so the personality, values, behaviour of the individual may change over time. As teams change the dynamic of the team will change and so keeping up to date becomes a vital part of successful business growth.

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As an organisation builds and grows it will change its values and personality to suit its environment and position. Keeping up to date with these changes is vital.

The most frequently misunderstood part of psychometrics is its dynamic nature. Profiling once is not enough, you must keep a regular check on the business and the individuals that make it up.

So in order to gain the most from any form of profiling / testing it is not enough to test potential recruits. The real power of these tools is in their ability to provide a picture of the organisation as a whole.

How much more powerful is it to use this information to manage, plan, recruit, develop and retain.

**So what do you know about yourself and your organisation?**

**Who should you be testing?**

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