

Corporate Recruitment: Proper use of psychometric tests

Almost all big companies and SMEs especially are increasingly using psychometric tests. The success of Psychometric tests as a recruitment tool is being widely recognized. However, one needs to “Have a hold on all the cards” in order to use them properly!

The use of psychometric tests for recruitment have greatly increased since the last 10 years. Be it in Europe, India or Australia, almost all big companies use them. In the US, however the use of psychometric tests is more wide spread, especially due to the governmental accreditation policy on use of these tests. It has also been found that around 70% of SMEs use psychometric tests. *"The costs of psychometric tests have also come down, remarks Vijai Pandey, India Operations Manager, Central Test, which makes it viable for small companies to use them as well."*

Tests, a “Recruitment Tool”

Given the increasingly similar CVs, psychometric tests provide valuable help to recruiters by giving them objective information on those aspects that are often difficult to evaluate through other means. They allow recruiters to save time and money, and reduce recruitment errors, that often turn out to be a costly affair for the employer.

However, they are not to be regarded as a crystal ball i.e. an only means to rely on. They are only additional tools and in no case can they be considered as a substitute for a recruiter’s judgment. *"We do not recommend to use them as stand-alone tools, in all cases, the final decision has to be made by the recruiter, advises Vijai Pandey."*

When should these tests be used?

It is best to use psychometric tests before the actual face to face interview i.e. only after the initial sifting of CVs and the first telephonic interview has been completed

The recruiter can get an access to a whole lot of information that he otherwise cannot get from the CV and cover letter alone. The recruiter can then use this data as a basis for discussion in the interview.

During the interview, the recruiter can confirm and validate the test results, as states Vijai Pandey: *"the test results are an additional help in the exploratory phase"*. For example, if a test shows, that a candidate has good innovation skills, the recruiter can question him on this aspect, in order to understand and find out how the candidate has brought about innovation in his previous jobs.

Which “Psychometric Tests” to choose?

"The ideal thing to do is to get a skills as well as a personality test done, in order to have a holistic idea about the candidate's profile", explains Vijai Pandey. The tests should be selected based on the job profile. For example, for a junior position, the Reasoning Test is recommended in order to find out the Intellectual Quotient (IQ), the Temperament Evaluator test can be used to evaluate the personality of the individual, and the Sales Profile test can be used if it's a sales position, the individual has applied for.

On the other hand, an IQ test will not be suitable for a managerial position. It is desirable to do the Emotional Intelligence test in order to evaluate the Emotional Quotient (EQ), that is the capacity to perceive, understand and manage one's own emotions as well as others' emotions. *"I would recommend doing an emotional intelligence test if the position requires frequent interaction with other people",* stresses Vijai Pandey. In addition, the CTPI Pro personality test which is specially meant for managers can also be used.

How to interpret the results?

"The criteria for the required job profile have to be defined accurately before conducting any of these psychometric tests, since these criteria will guide you in selecting the type of test, as well as in interpreting the results. Particularly for personality tests, the results make sense only in relation to the required job profile. There is no good or bad personality states Vijai Pandey." For example, if the Temperament Evaluator test reveals a strong need for supervision, this could be a positive point for a position which has many reporting levels, but it could prove to be a negative point for a manager who needs to carry out his functions autonomously.

Further, several aspects should be known in order not to misinterpret the results. The reading of scores needs special attention: if candidate A gets a score twice greater than candidate B for the discretion dimension, it does not mean that A will be twice more discrete than B in the same situation. This means A will show more integrity in twice as many situations than B. Therefore, a score of 90% in discretion means that the candidate will be discrete in 90% of situations. The other thing to know is: small differences in the score should be ignored when interpreting the results of psychometric tests.

"In order to master all these aspects, we advise that the testing staff should undergo training in the form of a one day practical workshop. Training helps to obtain the correct approach in the selection, administration and interpretation of tests concludes Vijai Pandey."

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