

WHY USE PSYCHOMETRICS?

Psychometrics should be used wherever there is a business need to assess individuals objectively and can also be used as a catalyst for enhancing personal and team performance.

There are many psychometric tools from which to choose and it is vitally important that the instrument used is the right one to assess the areas of need. This is why it is essential that you are clear about exactly what it is you wish to measure and that you obtain expert advice on the right ones to use.

The following paragraphs begin to explain how psychometrics can be used to improve the performance of your organisation.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

“Nearly three quarters of UK companies now rely on psychometric profiling when recruiting.”

The reason that nearly three quarter of UK companies now rely on psychometric profiling when recruiting¹ is that ability tests take the guesswork out of recruiting and give you confidence in making the right decision and therefore in appointing the right person.

They are a useful objective mechanism to short list candidates and can be used prior to interview to eliminate those individuals who simply do not have the hard skills to do the job. This way, they save you time and money. A numerical reasoning test is a typical example of an ability test, but other aspects you might want to measure might be the ability to think on one’s feet or to pick up new information quickly.

In a similar way, aptitude tests give an objective indication as to whether a candidate has the right qualities required to do a particular job such as computer programming work. Aptitude tests make you better equipped to select the person most likely to succeed in the job.

Personality profiling is also helpful in selection decisions. However well you define each job function, any appointment is only as good as the successful candidate. But natural competence and personality have scant regard for status. Often as not, a misfit will mean an expensive mistake... low productivity, disruptive staff and poor morale.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT Including Coaching and Mentoring

“The executive coaching programme that was run in 2000 for its 100 most senior managers has helped the company reduce turnover among the firm’s 92,000 staff - it has dropped by 15 per cent to 30 percent a year.”²

¹ .” Source: The British Market Research Bureau and The Times article August 2002.

² .”² Source: Personnel Today article on Safeway August 2002.

“Mentoring is about letting people explore options, yet Microsoft has found it helps employees find fulfilment - and stay put.”³

Nowadays it has been recognised that it's often not technical expertise that makes an individual a good manager or a great leader, it is the way they behave that makes the difference. Emotional Intelligence is more significant than having a high IQ when it comes to managing and getting the most out of people.

Research has proven that the number one reason an individual leaves their job is because of the person for whom they work. The behaviour of someone's boss is crucial to the contentment, satisfaction and career fulfilment of their direct reports. Basically, if someone does not like the person he/she is working for, if they are not giving the right encouragement or development opportunities, they are likely to move on to work for someone else.

Have you ever considered how you interact with other people? How would others describe you? What are your attributes and where could you improve your behaviour for your personal gain and for the good of the organisation? How do you respond under pressure and how does that impact others?

Do people like working for you? If not, why not and does it matter? Actually, it does matter. Motivated individuals perform better than unmotivated ones and that hits the bottom line. Staff turnover is costly in terms of recruiting replacements and training them. Although some labour movement is healthy, vital experience cannot be replaced overnight. By comparison, a more stable workforce gives strength and certainty and increases productivity.

There are a variety of psychometric tools and methods which can be used to make individuals more self-aware. This insight can be used on an individual personal basis or shared within a team to promote better understanding, communication and common goals. Coaching and mentoring can be carried out over a period of time with regular progress meetings as appropriate.

TEAM BUILDING

“Enlightened economists are highlighting the fact that the human capital is one of the few assets that could appreciate in value.”

⁴How do you make the most of your teams and of the individuals within them? What are the strengths, the possible limitations and gaps within your team? Are the individuals within the team making the most of their natural personal attributes? Can they work on some of their behaviours to improve their performance? Have the individuals in your team ever sat down together and discussed how they operate as a team? Have they ever considered the makeup of the team?

When you recruit do you hire people like yourself rather than people who have different ideas and contrary ways of working from you? If so, maybe your team is unbalanced and has a “gap” in its formation. Alternatively, why not assess your team's assets and capitalise upon them?

³ Source: *People Management* article July 2002.

Source: *The Gallup Survey 2001 on The Cost of Ineffective Leadership*.

⁴ Source: *The Gallup Survey 2001 on The Cost of Ineffective Leadership*.

The variety of how Team Building events can be run is endless. But once it has been decided what it is you want to achieve, an event, short or long, using psychometric tools as appropriate, can be put together to accomplish your objectives. The benefits of Team Building events are usually realised over time as mutual trust grows, communication improves and individuals feel more confident that they are part of a group dedicated to the achievement of common goals.

CAREER COACHING

Have you ever thought that you or some of your staff might be in the wrong job or that your whole career has been a mistake?

People who undergo psychometric testing and personality profiling benefit greatly from the insight it gives them. These techniques have long been used by businesses to assess potential employees. Why not use them to carry out a personal audit to assess where you are in your career? Take a look at the results of psychometric testing in relation to your career history and your aspirations. You could make a positive and rewarding career move based on your aptitudes and on what you have achieved so far.