

Using a Multi-Tool Approach to Individual Assessment

Psychologically-based assessment tools have become commonplace in the personnel selection and development arenas. Concise personality/work style assessments and fully automated report generation systems are frequently employed to identify desirable job candidates or provide basic development feedback to employees.

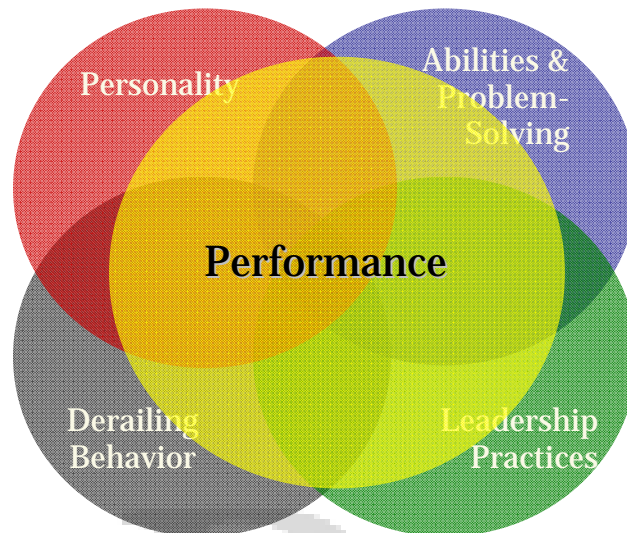
These tools, when validated and used properly, can provide solid information related to employee selection and development. However, using any assessment tool in isolation necessarily limits the scope of information obtained about an individual in comparison to a comprehensive, multi-tool assessment process. To provide an analogy, imagine you are shopping for a car. But you are only able to view the car from the outside. While that perspective provides valuable information about the car, there are other perspectives (e.g., sitting in the driver's seat, looking under the hood) that provide unique and equally valuable information. Having access to *all* of these perspectives will better position you to understand the desirable and not-so-desirable aspects of the car.

Utilizing our expertise in assessment and the underlying individual psychology it reveals, we employ customizable, multi-tool assessment systems to develop clear, comprehensive, and fully integrated descriptions of individuals. The in-depth and integrated descriptions of individuals produced in our assessment and development reports reveal strengths and areas of opportunity in a richer and more meaningful manner than the "two-dimensional" descriptions often provided by single-tool assessments. Our nuanced and individualized descriptions help properly position internal consumers to make great hiring decisions and create focused, behavior-based development plans for employees.

Successful multi-tool assessment processes employed by PRC have included measures of such individual characteristics and attributes as: leadership practices, personality traits, personal motivators, thinking style, cognitive abilities and problem solving, and derailing tendencies.

The true value of multi-tool assessment is its contribution to understanding a set of distinct yet related aspects of people. These various aspects are important because they exert separate *and collective* influences on a person's behavior and performance. That is to say, the meaning of a job candidate's scores on a personality measure is best understood by integrating these results with other assessment results (e.g., critical thinking, leadership behaviors, etc.). This holistic description of the candidate provides value beyond what personality scores interpreted in isolation can provide.

The figure below visually represents the overlapping, interacting interplay among various individual characteristics. Also, it illustrates how these various individual differences separately and collectively relate to job performance.



Examples

Below are two examples, drawn from our experiences assessing individuals for development purposes, illustrating the value of a multi-tool assessment process.

Example #1: Bob, a sales manager, possessed many of the personality traits associated with effective leadership. He was outgoing, assertive, persuasive, and engaging. However, Bob lacked sound critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Therefore, while Bob very much "looked the part" of a leader from a personality/work style standpoint, his effectiveness and performance were limited, particularly when faced with unfamiliar, complex, or ambiguous challenges requiring good critical thinking skills. These development opportunities would not have been adequately revealed through traditional personality assessment. However, the inclusion of a critical thinking test into the assessment process allowed us to identify Bob's area of opportunity and facilitate the creation of a development plan to address it.

Example #2: John was an experienced and successful regional manager. He was smart, motivated, and charismatic. He thrived in a variety of leadership situations and he performed at a high level. His personality characteristics and cognitive abilities greatly contributed to his success. However, John was inclined to occasionally cut corners and work outside the boundaries of company policies and procedures. Because John's rule-breaking behavior occurred infrequently and he was a good performer, his peers and superiors were largely unaware of this tendency. Also, John had a tendency to use his charismatic interpersonal style to direct people's attention away from issues he was uncomfortable addressing, such as his failures or shortcomings, and toward topics more to his liking, such as his successes. Traditional assessment tools designed to measure

personality, work style, and cognitive abilities did not reveal John's infrequent but potentially destructive rule-breaking and self-promoting tendencies. However, the inclusion of a measure of derailing tendencies into the assessment process and our expertise in integrating *all* the assessment results allowed us to identify John's destructive tendencies *before* he derailed. As a result, development efforts were undertaken with John to help him change his behavior and avoid derailment.

Our comprehensive multi-tool assessment process, while perhaps slightly more time consuming and costly than single-tool assessments, is significantly more effective at identifying desirable job candidates as well as employees' potential development needs. Additionally, the integrated approach to assessment employed by PRC can guide specific, focused, and individualized development efforts that are more likely to yield learning and improved performance than "one size fits all" assessment and development programs.

Assessment Results Output

PRC consultants prepare individualized assessment and development reports. Report formats are fully customizable based upon your needs. We have prepared reports ranging from one to twenty pages in length – all based on what our client wants and needs. We write our reports in straightforward, plain language.

Our typical assessment report includes:

- Ratings of established competencies, personality traits, cognitive abilities, and derailing tendencies
- Descriptions of strengths and areas of opportunity for all the categories described above
- A summary, integration, and recommendation (regarding personnel decisions)

Our typical development report includes:

- Ratings of established competencies, personality traits, cognitive abilities, and derailing tendencies
- Descriptions of strengths and areas of opportunity for all the categories described above
- Specific, behavior-based development suggestions based upon identified development needs
- Action plan materials designed to aid in setting development goals and monitoring progress toward goal attainment

If you would like to learn more about PRC and the services we provide, please visit our [home page](#) or [contact us directly!](#)

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