

## Psychometric Testing and its Benefits

The aim of psychometric testing is to provide objective input to assessment of candidates in a competency based recruitment process and also provides input to their future management once appointed.

More and more employers are seeing the benefits of psychometric testing during the hiring process. With the current influx of applicants in the job market, employers and companies are looking for more cost and time efficient techniques to speed along the hiring process. The personality assessments are perfect for determining who would be most compatible with others and with the desired position amongst all the applicants. The results of the ability and aptitude assessment will show the employers which of the applicants is most able or has the greatest capacity to perform the particular task or job. A quick and simple test is readily available to do the narrowing down of applicants and employers are using them more often.

There are also advantages for job seekers. Many people on the job hunt find that psychometric testing gives them an advantage. It measures their qualities and characteristics and reports their strengths and weaknesses. Thus, the applicant is better able to understand and defend themselves when the employer begins to ask about the weaknesses. It also helps those on the job hunt to narrow down the prospective professions, especially those that are unsure of where their career aspirations may take them. Many may find that a psychometric test can help them better understand where they should look in the job market and in what professional areas they are most likely to succeed in.

It is important for everyone to understand psychometric testing. Whether they are a prospective employee or a business owner, psychometric testing can benefit and affect everyone. Understanding the two types of tests (personality and ability and aptitude assessments) can help employers and prospective employees in their professional ambitions. The measurement of a person's personality and abilities can provide an insight of their potential professional life.

Tests may be loosely categorised into those that profile personality and those that test aptitude. For presentation purposes we will focus on three of their tests: Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ); Verbal Reasoning; and Numerical Reasoning.

Testing links into the assessment process through the competencies required in a candidate for them to be successful in a role. OPQ has broad categories or groupings of competencies and divides them up into sub-scales that a candidate is rated on.

It looks like this:

Category	Sub-scale	Rating
Relationships with People	Persuasion	6
	Communication	7
Thinking Style	Data Rational	8



Feelings and Emotions	Emotional Control	5
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Each category has a number of subscales

The Aptitude Tests are more tightly focussed. Verbal Reasoning tests ability to draw conclusions from written statements. Numerical Reasoning tests ability to draw conclusions from numerically expressed information.

The results of the testing are presented to the candidate in the form of verbal feedback. The candidate is presented with a “model” of themselves which they can comment on and discuss with the trained testing professional.

The result of the assessment is presented in three divisions: ‘strengths’; ‘how to motivate and manage’; and ‘investigate further’.

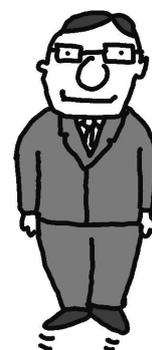
The information provided in these divisions come into play at different times in the recruitment process. For that reason testing should be applied early enough in the process to have a bearing on the interview conducted by the corporate client, and before reference checking. “How to motivate and manage” has ongoing input once the candidate is appointed.

#### EXAMPLE

Let’s look at an example. A typical Business Analyst might be expected to have as competencies, some of the following:

- Written and oral communication
- Analysis
- Team orientation
- Customer Focus
- Planning
- Organising

Within a candidate’s CV we would expect to see evidence of these competencies. At interview we would expect to find behavioural evidence that the candidate has these competencies. The Psychometric testing would then objectively measure for them. The report provided on each candidate on the shortlist would then present this information and in the “investigate further” category we would have a guide to things that need to be focussed on in further questioning at interview and at reference checking.



## Choosing the Tests

The competencies required for the role are identified from the job description and discussion with the hiring manager. A combination of OPQ and one other test would typically be selected in consultation between the Recruitment consultant, the Testing Professional and the Hiring Manager, to maximise the coverage of the competencies.

For example the OPQ sub-scale "communication" relates to the competency "written and oral communication" and we would expect candidates to score high relative to the norm for this.

If the emphasis of the BA role were testing, then we would want to see evidence of "detail consciousness".

If the BA role involved discovering, understanding and interpreting numerical information then we would want to apply the Numerical Reasoning test. If it was more focused on discovering, understanding and interpreting documented or orally presented business process information we would more likely apply a Verbal Reasoning test.

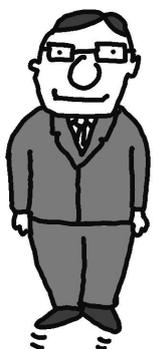
A psychometric test is one that is commonly used to evaluate and measure a person's personality, ability, and aptitude. By exploring the human mind and asking various questions of interest, the test is able to measure a person's personality and compatibility. The test is also capable of measuring general knowledge and a person's capacity to learn new skills. For many reasons, employers find that using psychometric testing as part of their interview process is very beneficial. For completely different reasons, job seekers and those who are confused about their professional aspirations find that the results of psychometric testing can provide valuable guidance.

A personality assessment evaluates different aspects of a person's personality. It asks questions about interests and what best describes the person taking the test. There are no right or wrong answers. It is simply a personality measurement. The results will give an insight into the person's hidden psychology and give an idea about how the person behaves or will behave under certain conditions and in certain situations. The personality profile can also tell what types of people this particular person would be most compatible working with and what variety of jobs or projects the person would be most interested in.

An Ability and Aptitude assessment can be used to evaluate a person's intelligence, abilities, and capabilities. Basically, this type of assessment measures the critical reasoning skills under certain conditions. It measures a person's strengths and weaknesses and should not be viewed as a pass/fail type of evaluation. The results are shown as a description of strengths and weaknesses. This type of assessment is useful for employers and job-seekers. Being prepared for known weaknesses will help smooth out the details during the hiring process.

An Aptitude Assessment is a form of psychometric testing that tests a person's abilities and what they are capable of. This type of testing is especially useful for employers who are looking for the person who is most likely to succeed on the job and who has the best natural qualities to make them successful in the given job. It can also be used by those on the job hunt to help them narrow down the scope of jobs they are interested in.

An Aptitude Test measures a person's abilities and the capacity of a certain person to be able to learn and acquire new and different skills. The goal of an aptitude test is to inform a person of what the person that is being tested is capable of, either in the present tense or in the future tense. It measures a person's strengths and weaknesses and objectively reports the details.



Many employers find aptitude tests to be the most useful of psychometric tests. It gives the employer an insight into the psychology of the person being tested and allows them to see the strengths and weaknesses of the person that may take years in the work place to find out. It gives them a general overview of what group of people the person might be the most compatible with and what projects the person may succeed in the most. It can also tell the employer whether or not the person has the capabilities necessary to succeed in the given profession.

Apart from employers, persons on the job hunt may also find aptitude testing to be valuable. Since it can tell a person's strengths and weaknesses, it is especially useful for an interview preparation. If an applicant goes into an interview fully aware of their own faults and prepared to defend them and present their strengths, then the applicant is at a great advantage. An aptitude test can also be beneficial to an applicant to the extent that it can help a person understand what types of tasks they would perform best at and which they would perform worst. In this sense, people tend to be unsatisfied with jobs and professions in which they are not successful. Psychometric testing can help a person identify which professional areas they are likely to succeed and which professional areas they are not.

The key to psychometric testing is to understand aptitude testing. It is a vital part of the testing process and employers take it into consideration during the hiring process. Many employers are utilizing aptitude assessments and incorporating them into their hiring procedures. With that, many applicants and job seekers are seeing the benefits of understanding and employing the test for their own advantage. Aptitude assessments are simple and valuable tools in all aspects of the job market.

