

THE GUIDE TO ASSESSMENT FAQs

WHAT ARE ASSESSMENTS?

Assessments reflect our own perceptions of who we are and how others perceive us. The results are based on your responses to short questionnaires. An assessment can help you understand why you make decisions, how you communicate, how you perceive the world and what you are capable of doing. Assessments can help you find a new career, job or companion. Assessments have been used for self-diagnosis for years. Those in use today have their foundations in the early 20th century when “personality assessments” based on both trait and psychoanalytic theories emerged.

CAN ASSESSMENTS BE USED IN BUSINESS?

Yes! Assessments are used to improve communication skills, develop leadership competencies, decide a new career path, or understand the best sales strategies. Employers use assessments to analyze job requirements to help find the best match in a new employee, to help their employees work more efficiently as a team, or to help employees communicate clearly with other employees or with clients.

WHY DO YOU NEED THEM?

Assessments help increase efficiency in teams, reduce turnover, improve communication, reduce workplace conflict and stress, identify best employees and grow them, and hire people ideally suited to the job — creating job match that pleases employers and employees, too.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

People are guided through a series of questions online and then receive a report with their results. Typically this includes a trained, certified professional coach or consultant who will deliver the results and feedback to the respondent.

WHO USES ASSESSMENTS?

Assessments are used by individuals, by businesses large and small, educational institutions, and non-profits around the world.

HOW RELIABLE ARE THEY?

The reliability and safety of assessments depends upon the degree of research and validation the assessment provider has built into the assessment. Some assessment developers have many years of product research to validate the results of their assessments. Ask your assessment provider for a history of their assessment validity and non-discriminatory research. Assessment validation research, adverse impact study results, and employee retention analysis results should be made available upon request.

WHAT SHOULD I PAY FOR ASSESSMENTS?

You get what you pay for... Not all assessments are created equal. Using assessments that are not backed by research and validation can negatively impact you or be plain inaccurate. Ask your assessment provider for product validation data before deciding on a supplier.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

PROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENT PROVIDERS

Many companies offer assessments, but not all assessments are created equally. Here are some questions to ask assessment providers that will help you weed through the available products and provide you with the confidence that you're making the right choice.

WHAT RESEARCH IS YOUR ASSESSMENT BASED ON?

Some assessment providers stand on the laurels of research done 20 or 30 years ago, while others are constantly evaluating nuances and staying on the cutting edge. The answer to this question tells you what level of scientific or research orientation the assessment company uses. Ask for research findings and published papers, preferably peer-reviewed papers. Assessment companies that use science based assessments engender more confidence than those who create and distribute assessment based on hunches or to receive some marketing buzz.

DOES YOUR ASSESSMENT HAVE A VALIDATION STUDY ASSOCIATED WITH IT?

A company that values continually improving its assessment business wants to ensure that its instruments are validated and predictable. This process, which is best conducted by independent statisticians for purposes of objectivity, includes everything from data norming to data analysis to structured equation sampling. This analysis assures you that the assessments you use fulfill not only your requirements, but those expected by the market and regulators as well.

DO YOUR ASSESSMENTS HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT STUDY?

An adverse impact study determines whether you are discriminating against any protected groups of people. It is important that both you and your assessment provider are found to be EEOC and OFCCP compliant.

CAN YOUR ASSESSMENTS BE USED FOR HIRING?

You want to make sure that the provider's assessments pass the legal and regulatory hurdles. Under the doctrine of disparate impact, employers may not use employment practices that, even though neutral on the surface and applied to all applicants or employees, disproportionately exclude members of a protected category.

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS DO YOU PROVIDE?

Some companies base their offerings on one assessment while others offer a suite of options that measure different factors. The answer to this question will help you understand the versatility and predictability of the assessment provider. Multiple providers can address multiple needs while single assessment providers offer only one piece to the puzzle.

HOW DO YOUR ASSESSMENTS DIFFER FROM YOUR COMPETITORS?

Your assessment company should be able to answer this question in a way that shows that they are up-to-date on what is available in the market and the strengths and weaknesses of the instrument in question. This reveals that they are in the business of assessments and knowledgeable about their competition.