



ASSESSMENTS

MAXIMIZE YOUR TALENT

AT EVERY STAGE OF EMPLOYMENT

It's time to explore areas of talent management where employees assessment integration is beneficial in order to provide organizations with more opportunities to develop their teams.

UNCOVERING & DEVELOPING TALENT AT EVERY STAGE OF EMPLOYMENT

OVERVIEW

Using an assessment during the hiring and selection processes is a widely accepted business practice. Employee assessments uncover aspects of the candidate's personality or cognitive ability that may be difficult to accurately identify during the job interview. By using these assessments, the hiring manager takes that extra step in ensuring that the candidate is intrinsically matched to the job. Assessments can uncover a person's motivation, potential, and overall job fit. However, while using an assessment for hiring is widely accepted, using assessments for other aspects of employee development is far less common. But it's time to shift the focus from just hiring and explore other areas of talent management where employee assessment integration is beneficial in order to provide organizations with additional opportunities to develop their people.



PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Unfortunately for most organizations, performance management is nothing more than a yearly scorecard that rates performance. But *rating* is not *managing*, it's only measuring. Performance management is about ensuring that the employee is executing the requirements of the job on a daily basis. Understanding the requirements of the role, for both managers and employees, is critical to managing performance effectively.

As part of a review, discussing the results of an assessment and linking the behaviors to a performance issue may help an employee create methods for managing the problem. Identifying successful behaviors could help the employee capitalize on other strengths, as well as compensating for weaknesses. Or, the employee might decide to shift priorities, work assignments, or approaches to job responsibilities. Insights derived from an employee assessment can also help managers provide in-depth feedback and specific examples that resonate with the employee and allow the manager to be a coach and partner in success. By understanding what may be causing performance gaps, the manager and employee can create strategies for success together.

It is important to remember that using an assessment with performance management interventions, an individual's potential as measured by an assessment should never take precedence over measurement of *actual* performance. Observed behavior must always be the driver of the performance appraisal and its associated feedback. The assessment simply serves as a way to create strategies for improving on-the-job performance.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Today's workforce is looking for more from their employers. Personal development and personal growth are very important not only to Millennials, but to Generation Z and their unnamed antecedents. One popular method for employee development is personalized coaching.

Similar to the development of HiPo's in succession planning, the employee development process can utilize personality assessments to provide insight about an employee and the ideal developmental areas in which to target coaching. Some assessments can provide insight and recommendations on behavior that could lead to better job performance and assist in the creation of a development plan. If an organization invests in an assessment at the time of hiring, they can capitalize on that information as well by providing valuable feedback to the employee.

If an employee did not complete an assessment at the time of hiring, they can do so as part of the development process. When the company communicates to its employees that the assessment is for development purposes, it conveys the company's commitment to its people. However, it is important for organizations to follow through on that promise by providing feedback and coaching based upon the results of the assessment so that employees feel valued and are confident that the assessment is meant as a means to assist in their growth.



EMPLOYEE PROMOTION

Promoting an employee requires the exact same rigorous analysis as the selection process. An unfortunate reality is that many companies do not have formal processes for promotion. Instead, these companies holistically replace leaders with current employees who are successful in their current roles. Companies should be certain that an employee is job-matched for a new leadership role, and the processes should be the same ones used for hiring and selection—assessments and interviews included, as leadership roles often encompass a distinct set of skills.

The sad fact is too many individual contributors, or those employees who do not have any direct reports, have been promoted from within to management roles without possessing the qualities needed for success. This could lead to a dismal job performance and overshadow the achievements the individual realized in his or her former role. One way to avoid this trap is by re-analyzing the results of the assessment the individual completed at the time he or she was hired using a new set of criteria, because personality assessments are most applicable and reliable when used as part of the job-matching process. By using assessments at the time of promotion, organizations help to eliminate the chance of setting up an otherwise successful employee for failure.

TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Although it may not seem obvious, developing a successful team is a prime example of the successful use of personality assessments. Developing an exceptional team can be challenging; complicating the issue of teamwork is the fact that many teams today are virtual, with many members working off-site. Often, teams do not work from the same office and, in some cases, not even the same time zone. This places even more emphasis on team communications and the personality of each individual member.

When developing teams, analyze the personality of each member and use this information to facilitate stronger communication between members. When successful, this will improve working relationships and increase efficiency. Assessments inform the team about the overall strengths and weaknesses of the group, as well as comparing key differences between members that could cause conflict. By targeting each individual's specific work style and identifying how it may complement or clash with those of other team members, a greater understanding of the overall team emerges. The assessment results can also be discussed in a group setting while analyzing the specific roles of each team member. This team analysis helps managers maximize the potential of both their teams and their individual employees.

Developing teams using assessments can create high-performing teams that exceed expectations. Organizations that employ these types of talent-management strategies have seen a positive relationship between team development sessions and powerful business results.

Some assessments used in team development and team analysis are distinct from those used for hiring; however, many of these assessments are not validated for hiring & selection. There is a tremendous advantage when the assessment used for hiring is the same assessment used for team development. First, because many individuals within the team are already familiar with the terminology of the assessment used for hiring, they will not have to reconcile their understanding with a different measurement scale. Second, the team development process often utilizes a similar methodology to the hiring process, in that there is discussion about role clarification and the goal of linking roles to personality attributes. Using the same instrument for both purposes eliminates the additional cost and time involved in re-assessing team members.

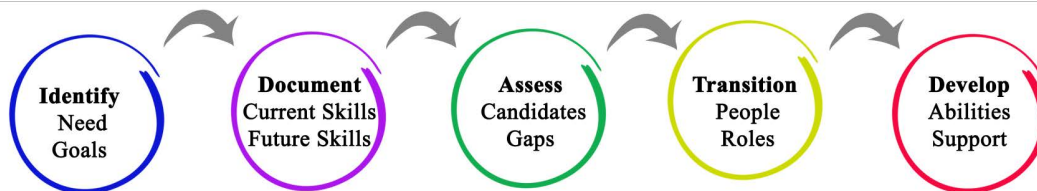


SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession planning has become increasingly important in the current environment of "talent wars." Succession planning focuses on finding those people who can fill leadership roles in the future, and can include both internal & external candidates. Companies are proactively creating systems to retain high-potential employees who will either replace current leaders or advance to newly-created leadership roles. Assessments are becoming an important part of this process since they offer an objective measure of an individual's leadership potential in relation to personal and cognitive characteristics.

Succession planning starts with identifying individuals who are strong performers in their current roles and high-potential employees (often called HiPo's) in the area of leadership. Using personality assessments in this process is especially important to organizations seeking to eliminate more subjective measurements of potential. When the hiring assessment is linked to succession planning, companies can identify those with leadership potential at the very point of hiring. With this kind of information, a person can be groomed for a leadership position from their first day on the job.

Succession Planning Process



Employee assessments can also be helpful for developing individuals who are identified as HiPo's so that they can participate in special learning programs designed to prepare them for leadership. When used as part of a 360° assessment, the behavior portion can provide insight and assist the taker in developing a plan to strengthen his or her overall leadership ability. In this process, the assessment often travels with the person throughout his or her development period, being utilized over and over as a resource for self-knowledge.

CONCLUSION

Companies that use assessments in the hiring process are experiencing the benefit of learning critical information about candidates that provides valuable insight regarding their behavior. Strategically integrating personality assessments into a company's talent management processes will become a best practice and one mark of what it means to be a top company committed to employee development and performance.

Moreover, using the same assessment employed in the hiring process during the entire employee life capitalizes on an investment already made and creates a common language regarding personality factors within the organization.

