10 CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHOOSING

THE RIGHT ASSESSMENT PROVIDER

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This guide will provide you with information on what is most important to consider when choosing an assessment provider and presents questions to ask potential vendors to help you make the best possible decision.

1. EVALUATE THE RIGHT CHARACTERISTICS

Some assessment companies use generic benchmarks or off-the-shelf assessments that are generic to a position or industry for hiring. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, unless the assessments don't correctly fit your position requirements. Hiring assessments must be relevant to the job for which they will be used and linked to specific competencies needed for that job. Even an assessment that measures what it says it does well, will serve no real benefit if it is too broad or isn't measuring something important for the job within your organization. Thus, companies would be wise to determine whether the characteristics measured in the assessment are unequivocally related to the specific job in question. This may be something you can determine on your own, but you should also look for support from the vendor to help you make this determination.

2. TECHNICALLY SOUND ASSESSMENTS

Hiring assessments must be reliable and valid to be legally defensible and useful for making good hiring decisions. If an assessment is reliable, it means that it consistently produces the same result for an individual. This is important because if the result changes for the same person every time he or she takes the assessment, it isn't possible to know which result is true for the candidate. For an assessment to be valid, it means the assessment accurately measures what it intends to measure. All hiring assessments should be backed by a comprehensive and sound technical manual that provides statistical proof the tools are reliable, valid, and do not illegally discriminate, and under which circumstances it is appropriate and legal to use them. If the assessment provider does not have a technical manual for an assessment they are recommending and they are not going to conduct a validation study with your population, one should view the suitability of the assessment with extreme caution. Also keep in mind, the existence of a technical manual does not in and of itself guarantee quality. Firms should determine whether the group characteristics, sample size, relationship to performance, and other aspects of the information are appropriate.

3. REAL-WORLD PROOF

Assessment providers should readily offer to prove the effectiveness of a hiring assessment through either a validation study or subsequent analysis of the impact of their assessments on meaningful business results. If the assessments have not been documented to have an important impact on another business or your own, you cannot be confident they will produce a meaningful ROI. Be upfront and ask potential assessment providers if they are willing to demonstrate an assessment's effectiveness and how they will accomplish this.

4. FAIR AND UNBIASED ASSESSMENTS

Assessments should not include culturally biased language or result in any particular demographic group passing at a higher rate than another. If a particular age group, sex, or race passes the assessment at differential rates, it is fair to assume the assessment is somehow biased against that particular group by measuring something that is related to protected classes. Fairness is a claim that many assessment providers gloss over by stating that they meet EEOC guidelines. But this should be thoroughly questioned by companies who believe in a diverse workforce and want to have a reputation for fairness among job seekers in their communities. In every case, companies should carefully consider the potential consequences of using any assessment in the communities and countries in which they operate.

5. CLEAR, UNDERSTANDABLE ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Assessment results should be straightforward and easy to understand. Because assessment results often must be properly and consistently interpreted by people without a background in psychology or an in-depth understanding of psychometric assessment design, they should provide clear recommendations for action in terms that are understandable. Ask assessment providers to show you what the results might look like for each position you are hiring for.

6. STRATEGY – MEASURING CULTURE FIT

Both job requirements and the work culture should be considered when developing hiring assessments. There should be a clear and overarching strategy to the use of the assessment(s) that considers the organization's culture, what it is trying to achieve, and how to select individuals who will help the organization achieve its objectives. An organization's culture – its values, standards, and expectations – can be predetermined and measured through customized assessments to predict the likelihood of a candidate's fit with your organization. Ask assessment providers to describe their process for measuring and hiring for your culture.

7. COMPLEMENTARY TOOLS

Some assessment providers will offer a single test that is purported to provide everything necessary to hire stellar performers, but the reality is that any one assessment is likely to measure only SOME of what is required for the job. As a result, it is best to combine hiring assessments with additional tools that evaluate the candidate in other ways and on additional characteristics that are important for the job. Examples of these tools are structured interviews, realistic job previews, shift follows, and work samples. By using a combination of tools, you end up measuring more of the candidates' potential for performance on the job and the best assessment providers guide you through the design of these complementary tools tailored to the needs of your positions and business.

8. EXPERTISE

The science of hiring requires an understanding of cognitive, social, industrial-organizational psychology, psychometrics, business, and technology. Best-in-class assessment providers will be staffed with professionals in each of these areas. There are numerous technology companies that deploy an array of talent management components on their platforms, but the technology-focused providers do not necessarily have the expertise in psychology and psychometrics (the science of measuring performance) to carry out validation studies or to continually develop new and relevant assessments for a constantly changing workforce. Vet the expertise and backgrounds of assessment providers to ensure you receive the business, assessment, and technology support and accuracy you need.

9. STRONG SERVICE AND SUPPORT

Be sure that any assessment provider you are considering is willing to learn about your organization's unique needs and issues. A good assessment provider views your potential relationship as a mutually beneficial, two-way street and provides support as a way of ensuring a long-term benefit to you. Be sure the assessment provider is willing to monitor your assessment results, providing information such as pass rates for the assessments as a whole as well as for groups protected under the EEOC, source reports that tell you where your best candidates come from, and ROI studies that prove the extent to which your investment in hiring is paying off.

10. THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Hiring assessments should create a positive experience for candidates. They should provide clear directions, be as short as possible, engage candidates with work-related content, and be mobile-responsive, ensuring candidates can easily complete on any device. An assessment that is difficult to complete or very unpleasant typically results in high abandonment (loss of candidates) and can also create a negative impression of your brand. Because your candidates are probably also your customers, it is critical that your hiring assessments positively reflect your company's brand.

NEXT STEPS:

As you evaluate potential assessment providers, use the checklist on the following pages to guide your decision.

Interested in learning more about our hiring assessments? Click here to schedule a demo.

QUESTIONS TO ASK POTENTIAL ASSESSMENT PROVIDERS

ASSESSMENT PROVIDER NAME:

TECHNICAL COMPETENCE

1. Is there a comprehensive assessment manual available that describes how the assessment was developed?   Yes   No

2. Does the manual include sections covering both assessment reliability and validity?   Yes   No

3. Does the manual describe potential outcomes of using the assessment?   Yes   No

4. Are sample assessment reports/results pages available?   Yes   No

5. Are there definitions of specific competencies measured by the assessment(s)?   Yes   No

6. What specific job performance dimensions were targeted in the development of the assessment?

    Notes:

7. What positions can the assessment be used for?

    Notes:

8. How will you ensure the assessment is job-related?

    Notes:

9. Do you have information regarding the validity of the assessment across relevant demographic groups?   Yes   No

10. Do you conduct ongoing adverse impact analyses? Can this evidence be provided?   Yes   No

11. Have you conducted research to test the performance of the assessment across cultures?   Yes   No

12. Are specific standards around cultural sensitivity and inclusion strictly adhered to? If so, how?   Yes   No

    Notes:

13. What are the credentials of your assessment development professionals?

    Notes:

PROOF

14. Are you willing to conduct a research or pilot study within our organization?   Yes   No

15. What kinds of results can you offer as evidence of the effectiveness of the assessment?

    Notes:

16. What other research studies have you conducted with other organizations? What did you learn?

    Notes:

CONTEXTUAL PERFORMANCE

17. What conceptual framework was used to develop the assessment?

    Notes:

18. Are there benefits to using the assessment beyond improving task-based job performance?   Yes   No

    If yes, what are they?

    Notes:

19. Does the assessment get at both the "what" of the job and "how" the job needs to be performed?   Yes   No

20. How do you ensure the assessments and delivery methods remain cutting edge?

    Notes:

21. What other hiring tools are available and how might these other tools add value?

    Notes:

22. What might be missing by using the assessment alone?

    Notes:

SUPPORT

23. Do you offer training regarding the interpretation of assessment results?   Yes   No

24. How quickly do you provide results?

    Notes:

25. What kind of support staff do you have (e.g., IT department, service department)?

    Notes:

26. What proactive support do you offer (including but not limited to compliance reports, adverse impact analyses, and source reports)?

    Notes:

27. What do you offer in terms of group-level results and corresponding reports? What support is available in interpreting these reports?

    Notes:

28. Will we have a dedicated point-of-contact?   Yes   No

29. Can you help us implement if necessary? If yes, what does that look like? What is your   Yes   No
    experience in deploying these types of solutions in large/medium/small organizations?

     Notes:

30. What training is available at the corporate and field level? How do you support new managers who will be using the system?

    Notes:

31. What is your percentage of up-time for assessment delivery?

    Notes:

ORGANIZATIONAL CREDIBILITY

32. How long have you been in business?

      Notes:

33. What industries have you worked with?

      Notes:

34. Can you provide references?   Yes   No

CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

35. Can I take the assessment?   Yes   No

36. Are the candidate instructions easy to understand and follow?   Yes   No

37. Is the length of the assessment reasonable for your organization and population?   Yes   No

38. What safeguards are in place to protect candidate privacy and confidentiality?

      Notes:

INTANGIBLES

39. Does the provider make you feel special or do you just feel like they are taking another   Yes   No
order?

40. Does the assessment appear job-related?   Yes   No