

Leadership

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Assess for Success: Assessments and What They Can Do for *Your* Business

A proper assessment/measurement strategy can offer amazing freedom, clarity, direction, and release to individuals and organizations.

Recent research has discovered that 80 percent of individuals dislike their work. Some are mildly irritated and one-third actually hate their jobs.

What does that mean to productivity and people's passion and job satisfaction, not to mention the happiness quotient of those who must work with dissatisfied individuals? With all the tools and assessments available, there's no reason to have such pathetic numbers.

1. What is an assessment?

Assessment is any process, tools, or methodology that benchmarks and measures a set of criteria for individuals, teams, or organizations. It is a strategy to accelerate and improve the performance of any individual, team, or organization. Like money, volume, or distance, assessment is a form of measurement; it helps staff members know where they are and where they are going. Measurement does not create results—it documents what is already true.

2. What do assessments measure?

There are no limitations to what assessments can measure. Assessments

measure personal style, job style, job fit, job competencies, leadership skills, team compatibility, character traits, aptitude, and much more, including interpersonal and self-management skills and organizational conditions such as teamwork, employee morale, and job satisfaction. Other areas of measurement include values, health, self-worth, integrity, and trust factors.

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3. Who can benefit from completing an assessment and having the results translated?

Everyone at some level can benefit from assessments—individuals, a business, partners, families (kids and teens included), and non-profit and volunteer organizations.

The use of assessments is appropriate, no matter the size of a business. Assessments can help you hire the right person—the first time. One business owner complained he could

never get the right person for a senior position. We recommended two assessments that would help in the process. For a six-figure position, he would not invest \$150 per person in assessment technology for the five individuals on his short list. With that attitude, he was consistently getting what he deserved—the wrong person for the job. How much was *that* costing him?

4. What are the perils in the marketplace re. assessments?

Not all assessments are created equal. Many individuals have legitimate concerns with certain assessments or tests because the assessments have not been benchmarked and the results are suspect. Make sure you select assessments that best apply to your situation.

Caution: just because an assessment is well known or has high market awareness does not mean the results it produces are reliable or even valid.

5. Do I need a professional to help with the process?

Yes and no. Many assessments can be self-scored and self-interpreted so you can apply the technology and look at the results in your own timeframe. Experts, however, can offer additional assistance and deeper interpretation of the assessment results.

6. What is the framework for the effective use of assessments in a personal or organizational application?

- Establish the primary items you want to measure before conducting assessments.
- All team members should go through the assessment process.
- Confirm your assessment strategy, and consistently implement and use it.
- Never abuse the privilege and confidentiality of the process; share all results with the individual.
- It is not the results that are important; it's what you do with them that counts most.
- Choose assessments that are proven in the marketplace and well regarded by their users.
- If you have no experience in the assessment world, contact a qualified professional who can recommend several options and choices.

The use of assessments is a must for any progressive organization or individual. In research conducted by the American Society for Training and Development, it was found that most profitable and successful organizations were doing two to four times the assessments than businesses that performed at below-average levels.

If you have not included assessment in your business and personal development plans, the time to start is now. ▲

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