

What Are the Most Desirable Attributes of Successful Employees?

Back in the early 90s two well respected organisational psychologist, Drs. David Bartram and Patricia Lindley, set out to construct a new psychometric assessment. They wanted to ensure their new tool would measure the key attributes and abilities that best identified “job-fit”. Obviously, their first question was, “What are these?”

To get the answer, Bartram and Lindley surveyed approximately 3,000 managers, HR Professionals, and graduate students. They asked, “What are the attributes successful, high performing employee always have?” Here are the top half dozen, in order:

Honesty and Integrity
Motivation and Drive
Interest in the Work
Conscientiousness
General Personality
General Learning and Reasoning Ability

Now I am sure you would have had similar responses. But, let’s just pause for a moment and look at the top 4. How would you determine these traits in a job interview? Maybe through reference checking – hiring managers are very poor at doing this properly. But, what about the final 2, probably your evaluation would be based on gut feel and education history – a dangerous and usually inaccurate measure based on emotion and rote learning.

Bartram and Lindley knew right off the bat that the ONLY way to gain an insight into these attributes and abilities, BEFORE hiring, was through psychology – hence these formed the basis for the development of their new Job Fit Assessment, Prevue - “The whole-person approach”.

As organizational psychologists, they also understood the predictive powers on measuring an applicant’s learning and reasoning ability, also a big predictor of employee performance. This led them to develop the Prevue assessment around 3 different constructs

1. *Learning and Reasoning ability* – How well the candidate solves problems and learns new tasks
2. *Interests and Motivation* – Based on the theories by Holland and Strong that people will perform better if they are doing work they are interested in – makes sense!
3. *Personality* – Based on the Big 5 theory, Prevue measures 24 personality attributes – 6 are based on the conscientiousness framework, once again the personality dimension that is most predictive of work performance.

Bartram and Lindley development Prevue over five years and along with continuing upgrades, constructed a superb assessment tool that strongly captures 5 of the 6 most desired attributes for workplace success – aggressive reference and background checking is needed to identify the top attribute, honesty and integrity.

It doesn't take a genius to understand a well constructed assessment that captures the most important attributes required by ALL employees to be successful is more desirable than gut feel. And, if you're "hanging your hat" on an interview, you may as well use gut feel.

Time and time again, our clients continually see the benefit of making HR decisions based on a job fit assessment that measured personality, interests and abilities, particularly when that information is not available via the most used, most expensive and least valid selection tool: The interview.

Apart from setting out to capture the most important attributes and abilities for work success, Bartram and Lindley understood the power of "job-fit". Whilst an individual measure of the above six traits is important, one need to understand how they would fit into specific job roles. This lead to the development of the benchmark survey enabling managers to align behaviours required for a specific job to an individual's Prevue results.

Benchmarks can also be constructed measuring current incumbents (concurrent validity study). Normally, customised benchmarking is extremely expensive and out of the reach of most small to medium size organizations. But, Prevue overcomes this with the ability to construct customized benchmarks quickly and inexpensively – usually within a day and from a one off-fee of \$150.

If you'd like to experience the benchmarking survey, it's online and takes about 10minutes to complete, just email rob@assess.co.nz and we will send you a test drive and follow-up report.

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