

The Perfect Match

Out for a morning walk on a cool Monday, I could see how we all naturally gravitate towards lifestyles and work roles that suit us.

At 6.30am, a neighbour was loading up for the morning one-hour drive to work. That takes some dedication. It was recycling day, and a driver was working through gaps between parked vehicles, despite the near darkness successfully grabbing bins with those inflexible mechanical arms. You'd need good hand-eye coordination, driving and navigation skills...and the ability to get out of bed early.

Joggers jogged, walkers walked, newspaper deliverers tossed; everyone seemed matched nicely to what they were doing.

It reminded me of when I was helping a client fill a role leading a team doing financial analysis and reporting.

One of the candidates appeared from their CV to be a good fit, and did well enough at interview. But something rang the alarm bells. As the process continued it became clearer that this candidate was relatively disorganised, not good with detail, and would bend the rules if they got in the way. She'd be bored monitoring work, and was change-oriented rather than into routine.

It was now clear that she didn't match our needs. What we had identified here - through psychometric testing - was a person who was spontaneous, global, flexible, creative, and adaptable. If we'd been recruiting for a 'creative accountant' focussed on developing new businesses, she might have been ideal.

What about your match - how would you respond to these questions?

Are you a person who quickly moves from one task to another? Likes to get a job over quickly? Won't waste time with something if it isn't working? Always keen to take on new challenges with enthusiasm?

If you answered yes to most of these questions, that's perfect - unless the role requires high levels of persistence and a natural preference for working around obstacles and pushing long complex tasks to completion in a stable environment.

Or these? Do you work well in groups, enjoy cooperating with others, find that two minds are better than one,

and put the team's success before your own? Great...unless the role is for a solo 'achiever' with individual targets and limited team support.

So why not just use the good old job interview? While great interviewing is still important in recruiting, alone it's not reliable. Some candidates become expert interviewees, and while they over-achieve at the interview might underachieve on the job. Some are the opposite. Reference checking, while still important, is also unreliable - a smart candidate will only provide referees who they know are onside and it takes skill for recruiters to get past this barrier.

The best-practice approach now includes effective psychometric testing.

Psychometrics deals with using and interpreting tests to measure variables such as intelligence, aptitude, leadership style, general personality profile, or even the ability to work in high stress-factor environments.

They help weed out candidates who don't meet role profiles, and identify that sought-after perfect match.

Some candidates wonder if it is possible to fool these tests and appear as the type of person being sought. While you can fool some tests some of the time, you can't fool them all, and the better tests have built-in detectors for respondents answering in an unrealistic or 'socially desirable' way.



Anyway, why would you want to? Successfully fooling a test to gain appointment would only help you get into something that doesn't suit. This would probably end up like any unhappy relationship.

Psychometrics help both employers and candidates, and are a vital tool in today's job market. If you

get the chance to complete one, look at the upside. If you're honest and the results are well interpreted, it can only help you get into the role that gives you that 'perfect match'.

For assistance with psychometric testing to help find your best fit either as employer or candidate, you're welcome to give us a call.

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