

The Popularity of Personality Assessments

According to a 2014 Society for Human Resource Management survey, 60 percent of workers are now asked to take workplace assessments for selection or career development; at the same time, the assessment industry is growing by 10 percent annually. This is good news for organizations in search of objective tools to better identify quality applicants and improve their development programs, said David E. Smith, Ph.D., president and CEO of E·A·S·I·Consult®. The growth of workplace assessments is due, for the most part, to the improved science of employee/applicant assessment over the years.

A recent article in SHRM's HR Magazine provides a number of suggestions for responsible use of assessments. Smith recommends that you pay particular attention to the following individuals cited in the article:

Dr. Deniz S. Ones: A leader in the field of assessment for selection and professor of industrial psychology at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Ones believes that a well-designed personality assessment, if used properly, is an accurate way to gauge if someone will be a good fit (within your organization). Ones also advises HR professionals to avoid using **tests that put people into "categories."** For example, a very popular test - the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) - is, perhaps, the best known personality assessment tool available. But even the Myers & Briggs Foundation cautions that the MBTI is not appropriate for employee selection, notes Smith, who is an industrial/organizational psychologist.

Dr. Frederick Morgeson: An organizational psychologist from Michigan State University says, **"What we're trying to do in the hiring context is to make the best guess as to how someone will behave in that job."** He notes that we are improving the odds for people who have to make the hard hiring decisions.

The article includes a list of questions to ask a test vendor when evaluating personality assessment tools. Smith suggests that one of the biggest mistakes companies make when considering any hiring decision assessment (for example, personality or cognitive tests) is, **"Does it come with a job analysis tool that allows you to identify behavioral job requirements?"** This is important to the legal defensibility of your selection process. Regarding a second major mistake often made by organizations, Smith agrees with Whitney Martin, a measurement strategist at ProActive Consulting, who is also quoted in the article. In selecting a personality assessment, employers often fail to focus on what they are trying to achieve. Some choose an assessment based on what other organizations are using rather **than on their own company's goals.**

To read the full article, click [here](#).

About the Author

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