

## Choosing the right assessment...

With so many different assessments to choose from, picking the right one can be a daunting prospect. Follow these tips to make the process less painful. In simple terms, an assessment is a structured technique that provides some form of measure about a person, which can assist you in a selection, promotion or development context. Tools range from application forms and interviews through to questionnaires, psychometric tests and work-simulation exercises. By using them in combination, you can make informed decisions about an individual's performance or potential.

### 1. Have a clear purpose

The starting point in any assessment situation is to clarify what you want to achieve. Only then can you make informed decisions about the most suitable tools.

### 2. Identify your needs

When assessing people, it is vital that you thoroughly understand the specific requirements of the target job or level (grade). You should identify the key six to eight competencies for the role, along with any specialist knowledge or requirements.

### 3. Do your research

The most popular assessment tools fall into four broad categories:

- a. application or nomination forms;
- b. interviews;
- c. questionnaires, such as psychometric, 360-degree or self-perception; and
- d. assessment centre exercises or work simulations eg role plays, presentations etc.

Psychometric tests fall into two categories: ability tests that assess what an individual can do in a discrete area, typically numerical, verbal or abstract reasoning; and personality questionnaires focusing on an individual's preferred style of behaving or motivation.

### 4. Consider your resources

The amount of time, resources and budget available will all influence your choice of assessments. Likewise, the role and level will most likely dictate the complexity and time investment in assessment, i.e. the higher the role / responsibility, the more thorough the assessment.

### 5. Understand the context

Understanding the culture of the organisation and knowing the types of assessments that would be acceptable are crucial. Another factor would be how a company uses technology. For example, if people do not have internet access, online assessments are likely to be problematic.

### 6. Seek advice from experts such as Slade People Solutions

Most assessment providers give advice and support. When briefing assessment providers on your requirements, ask what they would recommend. But be aware that a company that publishes tests will probably be partial towards its own assessments – so shop around. Ask assessment providers for detailed information about their track record: who else uses the test, how current the data is, how it supports their claims, what can be adapted to meet your requirements, and at what cost. Slade People Solutions, as a multiple assessment provider, offer a bank of over 100 different types of assessment and brands.

### 7. Try on for size

Once you have selected your assessments, you should try them out. This will confirm whether they are pitched at the right level of difficulty for your specific purpose, and will enable you to create a benchmark.

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Slade Group

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