

Interview on Behavioural Profiling With an Australian Authority

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Jacqueline Johns:

Interviewer and interviewee in the media. Author of Happy Life Mentor, Happy Life the JJ Way, Connecting With Your Inner Weirdo, Your Happy Life Site and along with Jack Canfield, Brian Tracy and Mark Victor Hansen, The Path to Success.



Greg Phillips has a long list of accreditations in behavioural sciences, human potential, cognitive behaviour and psychometrics. He is the psychometric expert at The CEO Institute and is one of Australia's foremost authorities on the most advanced psychometric profile systems.

JJ: So Greg, let's cut straight to the chase. What's the best behavioural profile available?

GP: Well Jacqueline, that would take a long and complex answer however let's see if I can put it succinctly. The profile that is the most advanced, most accurate, most detailed, most reliable and has the most flexibility is DISC ADVANCED®.

JJ: Why is that? What makes DISC ADVANCED® so good?

GP: There are many reasons but again, I'll try to be brief. DISC ADVANCED® is measured using the international standard scale, Cronbach's Alpha and it is externally validated annually; it has a built in Consistency of Results test so you know if the profile is reliable; it has by far the largest text bank of any profile thus is more specific and accurate; it identifies many more styles than other profiles thus is more dynamic and flexible; it accurately identifies a person's Natural Style (how they prefer to behave) and Adjusted Style (how they are actually behaving); it measures emotions, stress levels, uncertainty of job role, insecurity, frustration, pressure to change etc and unlike other profiles that are personality tests adapted to the workplace, it was created from the ground up for the workplace. I could go on but I'll stop there.

JJ: So why would anyone use anything except DISC ADVANCED®?

GP: Well, there are many reasons. Some people are interested in the cheapest profile they can get; some don't want to do any accreditation training so want a very basic tool; some people are just going through the motions – you know, tick that box; some are wedded to what they already know and they believe it suits their purpose so they stick with it and some people just *"don't know what they don't know"*. It's fair to say that a cheap and simple tool can be somewhat useful in some broad situations where a less specific overview is all that's desired. Herein however lies one of the biggest problems in the profession.

JJ: What do you mean? What problems are you talking about?

GP: Too often psychometric tools are used for inappropriate purposes. For example, many profiles used for recruitment shouldn't be. The problem here lies with the consultant, not the profile publisher. Regularly I see tools like Myers-Briggs (MBTI) and other DISC versions used for recruitment despite the publisher stating categorically that this is inappropriate. Obviously if the tool doesn't have a Consistency of Results test built in to ensure you know you have a reliable profile, it must not be used for recruitment. The publisher's are honest and ethical but too many consultants are either unaware or don't care.

JJ: Perhaps the consultant hasn't been trained properly. Is that possible?

GP: Perhaps. I'm not going to comment on other's training standards but across the profession there is significant room for improvement.

JJ: What do you do to ensure your clients are properly trained?

GP: Like anyone else you ask, I'm going to say that our training is great! Seriously though, I think there is a significant difference being trained by someone who runs all sorts of training and who was trained by someone elsewho was trained by someone else.....and so on, as opposed to being trained by a subject expert. All our accreditation training is done by me as is all the ongoing assessment support. Aside from being involved in developing profiles that's all I do, train and support our accredited clients.

JJ: What about resources? I've heard complaints from people about having to pay a lot for resources after their accreditation training.

GP: A very good point Jacqueline. It's true that psychometric providers charge for resources and this often amounts to many thousands of dollars. Sadly, because of the cost of these resources although they are necessary to do a great job, they are often not purchased due to the unexpected cost. This often results in the consultant delivering results below their ability. My goal is to have the very best trained and equipped consultants because I see the people we train as a reflection of our brand. We therefore give them all the resources they need at no charge – everything from the manuals through to a USB flash drive loaded with resources including PowerPoint presentations for them to conduct their workshops. When these are updated all accredited consultants receive the update free of charge.

JJ: You sound very passionate about this.

GP: Yes, I am. You see, the model used in some countries is to gain the client and then sell them lots of materials on an ongoing basis. To quote a participant at one of our recent accreditation courses – *"This is great. With others you always have your hand in your pocket buying something so you can do your job."* Bearing in mind that other psychometric providers in Australia are agents for an overseas company, they are stuck with the overseas model. We are the only organisation in Australia that deals solely in DISC. All others have DISC as part of their offering in conjunction with other stuff they do. As we're not an agent, we can do what we want – we don't have to sell resources because they're ours and we can give them away. Further, I was part of the team that designed the current reports so we are very involved in the methodology and process. These are just some of the reasons we say, we are DISC in Australia. DISC is all we do and when you work with us you're dealing direct.

JJ: Sounds very generous of you – giving all that stuff away.

GP: Not really, it's our business model. Simply put, the philosophy is to train thoroughly, provide all the necessary resources and provide ongoing expert support direct with me, their trainer. This way, we ensure that people trained and accredited by us are the best in the world.

JJ: I saw your client list on your website. You must have the best client list in Australia. How did you achieve that?

GP: Yes, we are very fortunate to have all levels of government – local, state & federal plus many of Australia's most respected businesses as clients. I guess you'd have to ask the clients why they choose us but I think they simply want the best, most advanced profiling system available.

JJ: Finally, what advice would you give to people considering behavioural assessment?

GP: Do your research. Consider your uses for the assessments and carefully check which ones stack up. Think about cost, resources, training quality and ongoing support. Look for undisclosed costs such as materials or kits. Some companies even charge extra for further training to use all the available reports, so check that your accreditation covers everything and all the tools in the system. The CEO Institute has a publication, *"Understanding Psychometric Profiling & Maximising the Benefits"*, available in PDF format, which is useful in researching this subject. Anyone wanting a free copy can request one by emailing us at service@DiscProfile.com.au.

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on Psychometrics
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