

7 Things You Must Know About Behavioural Assessment



Bev Friend as well as being trained in behavioural assessment, has more than 30 years in publishing, business management, retail management, buying and marketing. She helps teams perform at their peak within the corporate sector as well as with SME's. She is a trainer, facilitator and management consultant.



Greg Phillips has a long list of qualifications in behavioural assessment. He is the psychometric expert at The International Institute of Directors & Managers and is one of Australia's foremost authorities on the most advanced psychometric assessment systems.

BF: So Greg, what's the best behavioural assessment available?

GP: Well Bev, first of all you need to ask yourself some questions. Here are some things to consider:

1. What is your intended use – self development, recruitment or both?
2. Do you want a Personality Test or a Workplace Instrument?
3. Would you like to customise an assessment?
4. Do you want a simple or thorough assessment?
5. Would it be good to know the effect of the work environment on the person?
6. Would you like the questionnaire and/or results in multiple languages?
7. Do you want Action Plans contained within the assessment?

There are many other considerations however those 7 are a good start.

BF: So let's start with point 1. Why determine my intended use?

GP: For example, while many assessments are suitable for self development, most are not reliable for use with recruitment for a number of reasons. The most obvious is a lack of "anti-faking" scale. If the instrument doesn't have this built in, you don't know if you have a reliable assessment. Predetermining your use will also assist in determining what other features you need in an assessment system.

BF: O.K. What is the difference between a Personality Test and a Workplace Instrument?

GP: Many assessments are personality tests adapted to the workplace. A personality test originally created for social environments might be good for its intended purpose however when adapted to the workplace it wouldn't stack up against an assessment that was created and designed specifically for the workplace.

BF: That makes sense. So, you can customise some assessments? That sounds like a huge advantage. Can you tell me more?

GP: Yes, sure. A few assessments are fully customisable i.e. you can add your own logo, edit text, add graphics, delete pages, add pages, reposition pages or items. The benefits are obvious – your very own assessment exclusive to you and with the information you want and none that you don't want.

BF: That sounds fantastic. So, point 4 – simple or thorough? Why would I want a simple assessment as opposed to something thorough?

GP: There are a number of factors for different people. Cost is one. Another is that in some cases the extra information in a thorough assessment might not be required to achieve the objective. Yet another is simplicity for the facilitator e.g. they might want to use an assessment without doing an accreditation course and some assessments are available without a course while others are not.

BF: I would have thought it very useful to know the effect of the work environment on someone. How important is this?

GP: It depends on your use of the assessment. In some cases you might not be too concerned about this however in others it can be the most critical information you can have. Some assessments measure emotions and feelings. Things like clarity of job role, pressure or under-utilisation. This can explain a lot about an individual's performance and can take the guesswork out of managing people.

BF: Mmm, that's interesting. O.K. why would I want a questionnaire or report in another language if I'm based in Australia?

GP: A common situation is that for many people in Australia, English is not their native language. Answering the questionnaire in their native language ensures the correct comprehension of the questions. This in turn increases the accuracy of the responses. Given that the results are created from the responses, this therefore results in a much more accurate assessment. Another less significant point, although important to some people, is if Australian English is available. Some assessment systems use only U.S. English and this bothers some people.

BF: Tell me about Action Plans. What are they and why are they important?

GP: An Action Plan is a template to use the information for the development of an individual or team. It surprises me that so many assessments don't have an Action Plan. Too often assessments are thrown into a drawer and forgotten about without the respondent taking any useful action. This is a terrible waste of a valuable resource.

BF: So Greg, give me the pitch. What does your organisation offer?

GP: We offer a variety of solutions so clients have a choice that works best for them. Our options range from the simple to the World's most advanced assessments. Flexibility is key - everything covered from self development to recruitment, available in 103 languages including Australian English. We offer fully customised assessments or clients can use our regular assessments. Our assessments have been created for the workplace from the ground up and all include comprehensive Action Plans. We are a full-time psychometric organisation based in Australia – not a training business that does other work as its primary function and acts as an agent for an overseas supplier – psychometrics is our sole function. We specialise in assessments, accreditation training and ongoing support. I guess I would simply say that with all things, if you want the best, you go to a specialist. I believe that's why so many leading Australian organisations and all levels of government, as well as many independent consultants choose us.

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