

Psychometric tests are a must-have for every organisation.

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Psychometric tests are a standard and scientific method used to measure individuals’ mental capabilities and behavioural style. There are designed to measure candidates’ suitability for a role based on the required personality characteristics and cognitive abilities. There play an important role in an organisation whether small or big. There is general consensus among many organisational practitioners that psychometric tests give a more objective overview of a candidate’s character’s, strengths, weaknesses and working style.

Historical Snap Shot of Psychometric Test

The origin of psychometric tests can be traced back to the 20th century when they were used only for the purposes of educational psychology. The emergence of intelligence tests must be credited to Alfred Binet who introduced the concept in 1905. Since then they started gathering enduring momentum as a scientifically proven selection tool.

Why use psychometric tests when recruiting?

According to Schmidt et al (2016), an overwhelming body of evidence accumulated over 100 years of scientific research supports psychometric tests as one of the strongest and best predictors of performance among other selection tools.

SELECTION TOOL	EXTENT OF PERFORMANCE PREDICTION
Cognitive Ability	44%
Structured Interviews	34%
Integrity Tests	21%
Personality Tests	4%
Reference Checks	7%
Biographical Data	12%
Job Experience	6%
Situational judgement tests	7%
Assessment Centres	13%
Years of Education	1%
Age	0%

- They are objective and impersonal, allowing candidates to be compared in ability terms and are

not vulnerable to the first impression syndrome associated with other selection tools like the interview.

- They identify the extent to which candidates' personality and cognitive abilities match those required to perform the role
- The employers use the information collected from the psychometric test to identify the hidden aspects of candidates that are difficult to extract from a face-to-face interview
- Apart from that psychometric tests are structured in such a way that they evaluate different candidates' capacity to work with others, process information and cope with the stresses of the job
- psychometric testing offers some 'scientific' credibility and objectivity to the process of recruiting
- Psychometric tests eliminate the need to sift through a mountain of application forms and its best to work with the filtered best candidates than finding them from scratch.

Flowing from the above, it never ceases to amaze me why some organisations put so much emphasis on experience and education when advertising jobs. Some organisations even consider age when research evidence shows that it does not make any contribution whatsoever to job performance.

What are the different types of psychometric tests?

Below are some types of psychometric tests among others:

1. **Verbal Reasoning** - the ability to comprehend, interpret and draw conclusions from oral or written language
2. **Numerical Reasoning** - ability to comprehend, interpret and draw conclusions from numerical information
3. **Abstract Reasoning** - ability to reason logically with figures or designs. It is a non-verbal measure of reasoning ability.
4. **Mechanical Reasoning** - understanding of everyday physical laws such as force and leverage involved in the use of tools and equipment
5. **Space Relations** - the ability to understand and interpret spatial relationships between objects

What is surprising is, why the so-called custodians of recruitment prefer to use selection tools that are condemned as unreliable. The use of such poor selection methods is attributed to the need by those in charge to smuggle friends and relatives without capacity.

Psychometric tests filter out candidates who do not have capacity for roles and save any organisation from being the repository of incompetent employees. Therefore it is foolhardy for anyone to resist the use of psychometric tests when recruiting for any position since they measure an individual's capacity to do the job.

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