

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Subject What happened to Psychometric testing?

As a business we have always been fence sitters, neither really for nor against the need for candidates to sit through psychometric testing. We had, for a number of years, used a testing product internally for our own employees but recognised quite quickly that it should NEVER be used to base your entire recruitment decision on. Hindsight, as they say, is a wonderful thing...

Psychometric testing had become more and more popular with our clients across Turnaround Recruitment and Turnaround HRM over the last 8 years. In all sectors, from trainees to industrial recruiters to executive search recruiters and across all sizes and shapes of agencies. Recently however, we have noticed a decline in companies using psychometric testing as a prerequisite in their recruitment processes. As such we decided to go through our placement history of the last two years to compare this calendar year to date with last.

From January 2008 through to August 2008, 37% of placements we made had some form a psychometric testing associated with the recruitment process.

January 2009 through to today, only one of our placements made required the successful candidate to complete any kind of Psychometric testing before an offer was presented.

What??!! Why??!!

Obviously over the last 8 months we have made significantly less placements than we did over the same period in the previous year due to the global financial crisis. That said, we have still placed enough recruiters and HR professionals this year to have expected a slightly different outcome to this one we have found.

Could this be due to a change in our client base? Potentially, but after analysing the data, no. The one candidate that had to put through testing was placed in a long standing Turnaround client.

Could it be due to the companies that we are working with have looked to reduce their cost base that much they have scrapped their previous requirement for psychometric testing?

Could it be that recruitment processes have shortened and our clients are trying to rush the process through to offer stage? No if anything the process has dragged out a bit over the past 8 months.

Is it now such a candidate short market that the companies we are working with don't want to lose a candidate in the recruitment process so are skipping the psychometric testing stage not wanting to find poor results?

With all these questions in mind we decided to speak some of those clients that we have placed with this year and last who asked for psychometric testing last year but didn't this time around.

The recruitment agencies in this scenario claimed that last year they had been actively recruiting and had simply built psychometric testing into their recruitment process, whereas this year they really hadn't been recruiting and had hired the candidates we presented on an opportunistic bases, as the recruiter was already successfully establish and known for their successes in they market sectors and therefore the hiring risk was minimal.

This I'm sure we can all understand, anyone still working within the recruitment industry will know their clients expectations have considerably increased for the level of candidate they will look to interview and more importantly hire.

This still begs the question however, why was psychometric testing so important previously but seemingly not so important today?

Our belief is that the global financial crisis has woken everybody up. As employers we had become lazy with the management of our staff, our cost base and our businesses as a whole. We had become lazy with the initial recruitment process, with the "war for talent" we were, at times, settling for people we shouldn't have simply because their psychometric testing results looked good. It was a way of justifying a hire, the candidate seemed like a risk but their testing was good, so let's give them a shot.

In 2009 any growing business is awake and is watching every cost, every employee is now accountable, long gone are the lazy days of recruitment. Every new employee needs to be able to demonstrate how they can add immediate value, long gone are the days of hiding in the corner and being just another average performer, filling jobs as they are called in or floating candidates in the hope of a placement.

With this in mind is there still a need for psychometric testing companies? Yes we believe there is however it must be used as a management tool rather than a decision making tool.

We believe we will start to see psychometric testing creep back into the recruitment to recruitment process we are running for our clients as the market continues to show more promising signs. We do hope however, everyone in business remembers some of the valuable lessons learnt from the last 6 or 12 months and will now use psychometric testing accordingly.