

Saville Consulting Wave Professional Styles Handbook

PART 2: INTERPRETATION

Chapter 7: Feedback

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7.0 Feedback

Wave Styles assessments are used in a variety of contexts where feedback is an integral part of the process. This chapter starts with examples of three key applications of Wave where feedback is likely to be given. Feedback should only be given by appropriately trained users, so please contact Saville Consulting for more information.

7.1 Applications and Giving Feedback

The application of Wave Styles and exactly how the assessment is used in conjunction with other Wave assessments has a large number of different possible permutations. To give some insight into how Wave Styles can be applied in different contexts, three common applications of Wave are used to highlight some of the issues that should be considered. By the very nature of these applications this is designed to give the user some additional insight from experienced users rather than provide an exhaustive list of what should be considered.

Selection

When giving feedback in a selection context, it is not always necessary to give feedback of the full psychometric profile. Different levels of detail will be appropriate for different situations. For example, if the selection scenario involves having administered Wave to 20 job applicants, it may be appropriate to give two different types of feedback - one to those applicants who are selected for an interview and another to those that were not.

For those not chosen for an interview, it might be more appropriate to give a brief feedback session via telephone and to send them their Personal Report for their own self-awareness/development. For those applicants selected for an interview, the Wave Expert Reports (including their Motive-Talent and Normative-Ipsative splits) can be used to feed into a Competency Based Interview, with particular emphasis on their areas of strength and limitation with relation to the job description/job profile and on verifying areas where there could be potential exaggeration or even false modesty (from normative and ipsative splits).

It also may be appropriate to arrange a session to feedback to the candidates which is separate from the interview, to build self-awareness of the whole profile for the candidate. Again, the format of the feedback may vary significantly for individuals that are appointed and those that are not. For those that are appointed, the Wave Expert report and particularly the preferred culture can help new appointees and their manager think of how best to bring the individual 'on-board' by identifying areas for the new appointee and their manager to focus on in the first 100 days.

Points to consider when giving Wave feedback as part of Selections:

- Not always giving full feedback at interview stage – focusing on areas which are particularly relevant to the role
- Look in particular at strengths on the profile to verify
- Or limitations to consider impact on performance
- Feed questions into Competency Based Interview*
- Consider Normative-Ipsative splits as areas for further investigation at interview stage
- Integrate with other information – for example from Assessment Center, etc.*

**If integrating Wave into an Assessment or Development Center matrix or Competency Based Interview, Wave users typically benefit from mapping the criteria they are assessing to the 147 components of Behavior, Ability, Global model of the Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework. This allows clarity on where each Wave component will relate to performance on the assessment center or interview.*

Development

When giving feedback for development purposes, it is always important to set aside enough time to give full and thorough feedback on the assessee's or developpee's Wave Expert Report Profile. Adequate time should also be allowed for any questions the person may have and for discussion of implications and future development plans stemming from the results of the profile. For Wave Professional Styles, initial development feedback sessions often are timed to run for an hour and a half (although the length of these sessions is highly dependent on the process).

The Saville Consulting Wave model is built on a strengths perspective; the focus should be on identifying areas of strength and building on these. While Saville Consulting emphasize building strengths as the most effective development model for the majority of people, it is also often important for individuals being developed to understand where their strengths are most lacking and could adversely impact on their effectiveness at work. For this reason, the Expert Report profile can also be used to discuss areas of relative weakness and how these can be incorporated into a development plan.

It may be useful in Development settings, to complement the feedback of the Expert Report with the Saville Consulting Wave Development Report. This development report is driven by the same questionnaire which drives the Expert Report and gives an output which is compatible with Development planning. The Development Report was designed to help bridge the gap between diagnosis and action planning.

The Development report contains four sections:

- **Building Strengths** - bullet point advice is given on ways to develop and make the most of existing strengths.
- **Possible Overplayed Strengths** - the potential pitfalls of possessing strengths are outlined followed by an example of an action to avoid the pitfall or unwanted consequence.
- **Managing Limitations** - areas of limitation are areas where it is important that an individual is realistic about and can manage them (rather than attempt to change them).
- **Development Tips** - finally these are areas where the individual lacks strength and could choose to develop these. Bullets are provided to develop these strengths.

The 'Possible Overplayed Strengths' category is often particularly powerful in practice for high performing individuals.

Points to consider when giving Wave feedback for Development:

- Identify and discuss areas of strength on the profile
- Discuss how individuals can 'play to' these (e.g., by selecting work which suits their talents) or develop these further
- Identify and discuss possible limitations and areas for development ('Development Tips' and 'Managing Limitations' on the Development Report)
- Discuss how these areas can be managed and developed and whether they should be, and realistically can be, developed or simply managed
- Explore the implications of areas of strength and areas for development for the individual on work performance
- Work to create a clear picture with the individuals of what impact development or the lack of it could have on their core personal objectives e.g., getting promoted, changing job
- Consider using the Saville Consulting Development Report to complement the development discussion
- Make sure that follow up action and a system of continued development support is in place (e.g., action learning set, individual coaching session, review of development actions)

Wave for Team Development

When giving feedback in a Team Development setting, it is common to use the Saville Consulting Wave Team Roles report - refer to the Team Roles chapter. This provides the opportunity for individuals to understand where their own style will impact on performance and where there are likely synergies with others and potential clashes.

Points to consider when giving Wave feedback for Team Development:

- Before feeding back the results to individuals it is important that the team is clear on its purpose, aims and objectives.
- Consider whether team members receive feedback on their results individually before being given Team feedback? If feeding back Wave Expert as well as Team Roles then giving individual feedback before giving group feedback is recommended.
- Consider whether each individual will be identified - using a different symbol color when plotting a group profile.
- Profile the whole team against the Team Roles model (available from Saville Consulting) by adding each member's primary, secondary and two least preferred team roles - this can be done anonymously or as part of the facilitation if naming individuals.
- Ask the team members to consider, what are their combined strengths and potential limitations.
- Get the team members to work out what things it will need to manage carefully and where they may benefit from extra resources.
- Ask the team members to reflect on past examples if they are an established team.
- Get the team members to think about the challenges they are about to face.
- Ask the team members what actions they need to take and how they will review the team's actions and performance going forward.

7.2 Rich Interpretation - The Deep Dives

Interpreting Facet Ranges - Deep Dive 1

- *Where the range of facet scores within any dimension is of three stens or more, this is indicated by hatching on the dimension scale. Individual facet scores in brackets alongside each verbal facet description are also provided.*

Facet ranges on any dimension provide useful information to the user about an individual's breadth of interest/ talent within that dimension. For example, the dimension of 'Articulate' is made up of the facets 'Presentation Oriented,' 'Eloquent' and 'Socially Confident.' Where individuals come out as a sten eight on 'Eloquent' and 'Socially Confident' but as a sten two on 'Presentation Oriented,' it demonstrates that they do not feel their strength lies in this area of Articulate. Their overall score on the dimension 'Articulate' would still be relatively high but they will show a facet range on this dimension.

The overall dimension level score (e.g., Articulate) tends to give a good indication of the level of an individual on a trait (and is a good indicator of performance in the aligned behavioral criterion). The facets and facet ranges give more information as to what that behavior will look like at a detailed behavioral level.

Interpreting Motive-Talent Splits - Deep Dive 2

- *If an individual shows a difference of three stens or more between the Motive and Talent score on a dimension, this is highlighted in the Psychometric Profile of the Expert Report and may indicate a point of interest.*

If Motive higher than Talent:

If Motive is higher than Talent on a particular dimension, this demonstrates that individuals have more interest and motivation than they perceive to have talent in this area. It may be that they would like to be better at this area, but feel their talent is not as high as they would wish.

Individuals may well consider this area as a motivated development need. For example, they want to be more Analytical or Self-assured. There are many reasons why individuals may report such a discrepancy, for instance their work environment or culture might be preventing them from developing this talent or they may simply lack the appropriate skills. This highlights a particular area for development or training to help individuals to achieve their potential in this area.

• Giving Feedback:

- Explore the discrepancy, discuss the potential development need and discuss ways in which the individual could be helped to develop in this area.
- In a Coaching or Development setting, for example, three points could be considered:
 1. How much of a development need is this area?
 2. How will developing this area impact upon work performance?
 3. To what degree is it possible to develop this area?

If Talent higher than Motive:

If Talent is higher than Motive, this indicates that individuals may feel that they have a high level of effectiveness in this area but they are not particularly interested in or motivated by this area. For example, individuals who showed a Motive-Talent split in this direction on the dimension 'Directing' may feel they are good at being in control of a group and directing others but this is not an area that they are motivated by.

It is important to understand whether the individual finds the talent easy or difficult to display. If displaying this talent is challenging for the individual, this may lead to becoming strained or even mentally drained or stressed by constantly having to push him or herself to demonstrate a talent they have little motivation to display. In such cases external rewards and encouragement may help sustain performance as this behavior is not intrinsically rewarding. For example, showing lower Motive than Talent on the dimension of Organized may lead to burnout if the work environment continuously

demands use of such attributes. Another, alternative is to change the demands of the job or change to a job with different demands.

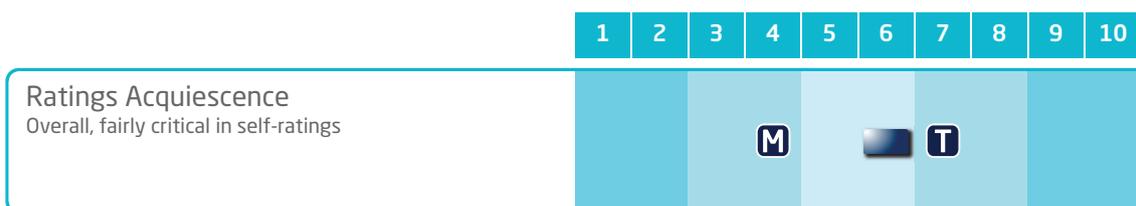
A discrepancy between Motive and Talent could be caused by a number of factors. It is possible that it is due to environmental factors or personal factors. Environmental factors could include unrealistic expectations of the current work environment, e.g., being required to constantly demonstrate behaviors related to a certain attribute, or alternatively feeling de-motivated by the demands of the current work environment. On the personal factors side, this could simply be an area which the individual is not interested in and wishes to avoid working in for future roles.

• **Giving Feedback:**

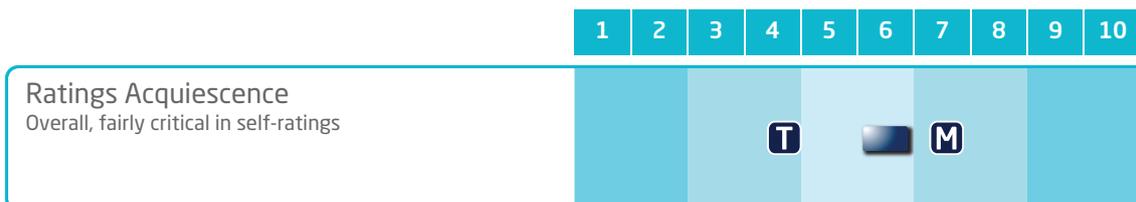
- Explore the discrepancy, try to understand why motive is lower (e.g., work environment? Lack of interest in this area?) and what impact this may have on performance (e.g., only rare or occasional display of effective behavior?)
- In a selection setting, in a structured interview, for example, it may be useful to:
 1. Seek a behavioral example of this dimension
 2. Discuss the underlying motivation
 3. Probe of the frequency of demonstrating this or similar behaviors

Motive-Talent split on Ratings Acquiescence

On rare occasions it is possible for a motive-talent split to occur on an individuals' Ratings Acquiescence. When talent is higher than motive (as depicted below) an individual may be highly capable but disengaged with what they are doing.



When motive is higher than talent (as depicted below) an individual might not feel they are performing as well as they would want to be performing.



Interpreting Normative-Ipsative Splits - Deep Dive 3

- *If individuals show a difference of three stens or more between their Normative and Ipsative score on a dimension, this is highlighted in the Psychometric Profile of the Expert Report and may represent a point of interest.*

Normative-Ipsative splits are useful in that they target specifically where there may be some response distortion in the profile. Rather than have a single measure of 'Social Desirability' or even 'Lie scale' which attempts to give an overall indication of whether there was an attempt to distort results, Normative-Ipsative splits pin-point where individuals give more than one version of the truth.

Normative-Ipsative splits on a profile highlight specific areas for further verification. In other words, Normative-Ipsative splits in Saville Consulting Wave allow the Wave user to understand the specific areas where socially desirable responding (or overly self-critical responding) may have occurred.

Differential interpretations of Normative-Ipsative Splits in both directions are discussed on the next page.

If Normative score higher than Ipsative score

Where individuals have a higher normative score than ipsative score, it may mean that they have been less self-critical and have possibly exaggerated their normative description. This means that when individuals were asked to rate themselves on this dimension, they have rated themselves relatively highly, in comparison to when they were asked to rank this dimension against other dimensions. Individuals may be responding normatively by answering how they would like to see themselves if given free reign (no constraints on their behavior). For example, they may like to think of themselves as highly 'Attentive' to others. However, when presented with the choice of other areas, the importance of being attentive may be relatively weak (if there are tasks to complete, people to influence, ideas to generate, etc., then being Attentive is less of a priority). One hypothesis in feedback that could be explored is that this may follow through into them acting more like their Normative description when there is no pressure or constraint, but more like their Ipsative score when there is less freedom or more pressure.

It is important to understand the reasons for an individual receiving a Normative-Ipsative split in this direction. It could demonstrate high self-confidence in this area. However, in a recruitment situation, Normative-Ipsative splits in this direction could demonstrate an attempt to distort or 'fake' results consciously or unconsciously in favor of what an individual thinks the interviewer or recruiter is looking for.

• Giving Feedback:

- Check/Verify for potential exaggeration/distortion
- Ask which of the two markers (N or I), they feel is most representative of them
- Ask for examples of times when they've demonstrated this attribute. This may help you to build up a clearer picture of if and when each of the two scores is more representative of their behavior.

If Ipsative score higher than Normative score

If individuals have a higher Ipsative score than Normative score, this highlights an area in which they may have been overly modest or self-critical. This area could be one in which the individuals are higher than the rating portrays.

In this situation individuals have rated themselves as lower on this dimension than they have ranked it in a forced-choice situation. So, although individuals may feel that they are not particularly strong in this area, they may have more talent or motive than they initially give themselves credit for. One hypothesis to explore is that they may have a negative stereotype of themselves in this area but that they can give positive, concrete examples of where they have risen to the challenge and demonstrated strong performance in this area. This could lead to them demonstrating better performance on this dimension in the workplace than would be expected from their psychometric profile. A component of feedback which may result from one or more Normative lower than Ipsative splits is helping to build confidence in the area identified.

• Giving Feedback:

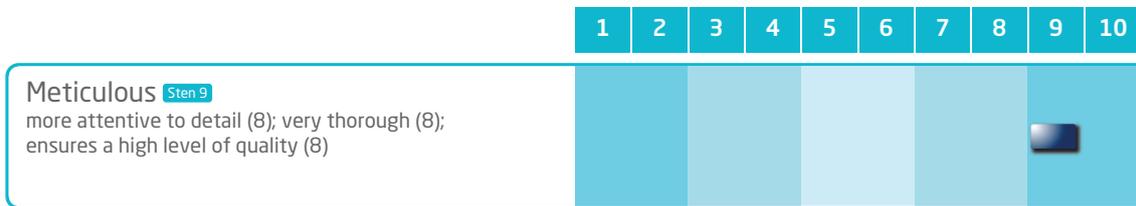
- Check/Verify for potential false modesty/self-criticism
- Ask which of the two markers (N or I), individuals feel is most representative of them
- Ask for examples of times when individuals have demonstrated this attribute. This may help you to build up a clearer picture of which of the two scores is more representative and which is more distorted (or when effective behavior is more likely to be seen).

7.3 A Note on Scores

It is possible on Wave Professional Styles or Wave Focus Styles to receive a sten score of, for example, nine on an overall dimension, while all three facets that make up the dimension are sten scores of eight. This is to be expected and is a normal property of standardizing scores in a hierarchical scale structure.

The individual facets each measure similar, related, but not perfectly correlated constructs. It is, therefore, more unusual for someone to be high on all three facets of a dimension than to have a combination of scores with some high and low variation. The presence of three consistently high facet scores, therefore, is more unusual than the presence of a mixture of facet scores. The summing and norming of three facet scores into one dimension score may result in a higher score than the simple average of the three facets.

Figure 7.1 An example of Standardizing Sten Scores



This is also true at the other end of the sten scale where someone has three scores of two on the underlying facets which leads to a dimension sten score of one.

Borderline scores can also create similar effects. The facet scores could all be high sten '8's leading to their sum reading a '9' or even a '10'.

7.4 Feedback Process

This section provides some guidance to users on approaches to delivering feedback based on Wave Styles reports.

Preparing to Give Feedback

- Step 1:** Consider the purpose
- Step 2:** Understand job requirements and identify key Wave dimensions or competencies
- Step 3:** Review entire report(s); think through 'splits' in the Expert Report if appropriate
- Step 4:** Take notes and/or use highlighter pens to guide feedback discussion
- Step 5:** Schedule protected time and location for feedback meeting
- Step 6:** You may choose to integrate with other assessment data (e.g., track record/resume, interview results, aptitude assessments) during the feedback session to look for themes and explore any 'red flags' in more depth. Alternatively, you may decide to keep the information from this report independent from other assessments to avoid 'contamination' until it is time to integrate as part of the decision making process.

Introduction to Feedback

Feeding Back with the Expert Report

1. Completion atmosphere

“Was there anything when you completed that would lead to the results being unrepresentative?”

 - how did you find it?
 - how long did it take you?
 - anything happening at the time of completion?
 - any distractions during completion?
 - where were you completing it?
2. Review points covered in the ‘About this Report’ section on page 2 of the report:
 - a) Report will look at motives, preferences, needs and talents in work-specific areas
 - b) Results are compared against a comparison group, e.g., 1,000 professionals
 - c) Stens = standardized 10 point scale on normal curve with scores of 5 or 6 typical and 1 and 10 highly unusual/rare
 - d) Results are based on self-report data so will reflect the individual’s own self-perceptions
 - e) Report is confidential (explain who will see results)
 - f) Data has shelf life of 12 to 24 months, depending on circumstances
3. Introduce Saville Consulting Wave Model hierarchy (4 clusters, 12 sections, 36 dimensions and 108 facets), using page 4 of report as a demonstration (if preferred)
4. Feedback the Executive Summary Profile on page 4 of report
5. Feedback the Response Styles Summary on page 5 of the report (if appropriate)

NB. This may not be necessary in some situations (e.g., recruitment) as this page is intended to provide detailed information on an individual’s response styles and possible inconsistencies (see Scale Descriptions chapter for interpretation of the Response Style Summary scales) for users of the assessment, in order to highlight areas that may need probing in interview.
6. Feedback detail of the report using the Psychometric Profile on pages 6 to 9 of the report
7. Explain M-T splits and N-I splits (*see Richer Interpretation section in this chapter for information on interpreting splits*)

8. Make links - particularly to the impact on performance - i.e., this can be to the performance clusters and sections that the scales are based in.
9. Use the sandwich approach (i.e., present strengths, areas to develop, then close with strengths)
10. Summarize key points
11. Conclusion and next steps

Feedback Approach

- Encourage inputs - ask open questions, ask probing questions; avoid closed, hypothetical and multiple questions
- Be attentive
- Be sensitive
- Be objective - avoid value judgments
- Be specific
- Have the courage to confront all the data

Discussion Process

Use the mnemonic EAT PEAS to guide you through the feedback session.

- E** Explain/introduce dimension/facet
- A** Ask, or
- T** Tell the position/scores on the dimension/facet and splits
- P** Probe with behavioral questions
- E** Example (ask for examples of times when the individual has demonstrated this approach)
- A** Advantages/Disadvantages (more for developmental applications)
- S** Summarize

Self-Report Descriptors

Useful terms for Feedback sessions:

- "You describe yourself as..."
- "You suggest that..."
- "You have indicated that..."
- "You see yourself as..."
- "Your responses indicate..."

Sten Descriptions

Useful terms for describing sten scores:

Sten 10	"Extremely ..."
Sten 9	"Very ..."
Sten 8	"More Clearly ..."
Sten 7	"Fairly, quite ..."
Sten 6	"Moderately, neither ... nor, average, typical ..."
Sten 5	"Moderately, neither ... nor, average, typical ..."
Sten 4	"Slightly less ..."
Sten 3	"Less inclined ..."
Sten 2	"Shows limited interest in ..."
Sten 1	"Seldom, rarely, disinclined ..."

7.5 Faking and Distortion

An issue that is often raised as a concern when using personality measures, particularly for assessment, is that of 'distortion.' Distortion can take the form of candidates attempting to 'fake' their results by second guessing what a desirable profile would be for a particular job and trying to complete the questionnaire in a way that may achieve the desired result.

Saville Consulting Wave® uses a variety of techniques to help reduce and identify candidate attempts at distortion, both in terms of prevention and detection.

Prevention:

Prior warnings

To reduce the risk of faking or distortion, candidates are encouraged to be honest in their answering of the assessment and prior warnings are given that faking can be detected. For example, the following points are included in Wave administration:

- "Please be as honest as you can. There is no one right or wrong answer; job roles vary and there are many ways of being effective in any one job."
- "A number of response checks are built into the questionnaire to check the consistency and accuracy of your responses. Your responses will also be compared and verified against other information collected about you."

In order to decrease the likelihood of distortion or faking, you should ideally repeat this advice in any supporting emails that you send out prior to the assessment or at the beginning of the session in a supervised administration.

More information is provided in the Administration and Security chapter.

These points are particularly important to reinforce where there is a high stakes selection scenario where the motivation to fake may be greater.

Feedback & Integration of results

To reduce the risk of faking or distortion, it is also advised that prior to completion it is made clear to the candidates that their results will be considered and cross-referenced with other assessment information collected and that their results are likely to be further explored with behavioral examples in a feedback session.

Detection:

Normative-Ipsative Splits

These are built into every dimension of the Wave questionnaires and are designed to detect inconsistencies in responding style. These provide a local means of detecting potential distortion within individual behavioral areas (rather than one scale of “social desirability”).

Response Style

The Response Summary Page provides an overview of the individual’s style of responding. For example, this will show if an individual has responded in a self-confident way (high Ratings Acquiescence) and has a low Normative-Ipsative Agreement overall (which could suggest potential exaggeration or distortion). It is worth noting that while high Ratings Acquiescence may indicate an overly positive self-view of capability, on average high Ratings Acquiescence scores do show a relationship to higher overall effectiveness at work. In other words, a high Ratings Acquiescence score does not always indicate distortion on the part of the respondent.

In order to establish whether the high Ratings Acquiescence score is a fair reflection of high capability and motivation across many behaviors or whether this reflects distortion, it is important to explore whether there is behavioral evidence to support the high Ratings Acquiescence score. If in the course of the feedback interview, behavioral evidence to support high self-belief such as strong track record of exceptional delivery or performance is not found, this could indicate distortion on the part of the individual. This could take the form of either unconscious distortion - where individuals have an overly positive view of themselves, or conscious distortion - where individuals are making a deliberate, conscious attempt to make themselves look better on the profile.

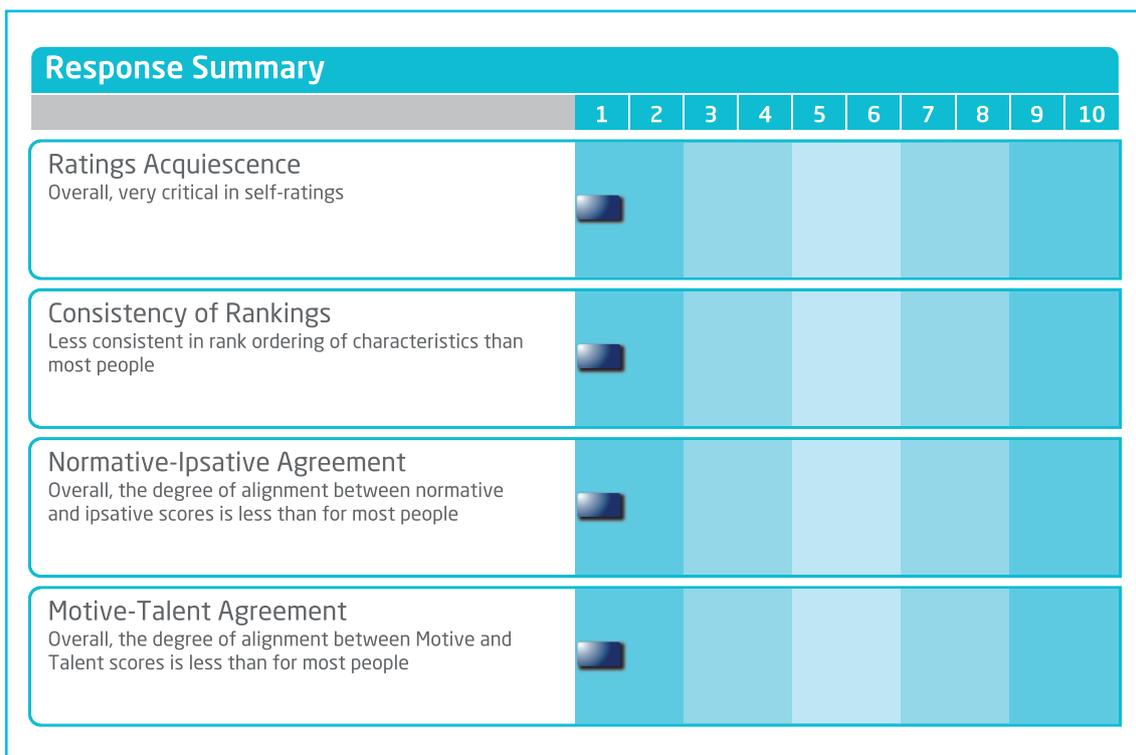
For more details on interpreting Response Summary Scales see Scale Descriptions chapter.

An Example of Faking - Low Motivation Responses

Despite all of these measures, gross distortion can occur and this can be highlighted by several features of the Wave Report.

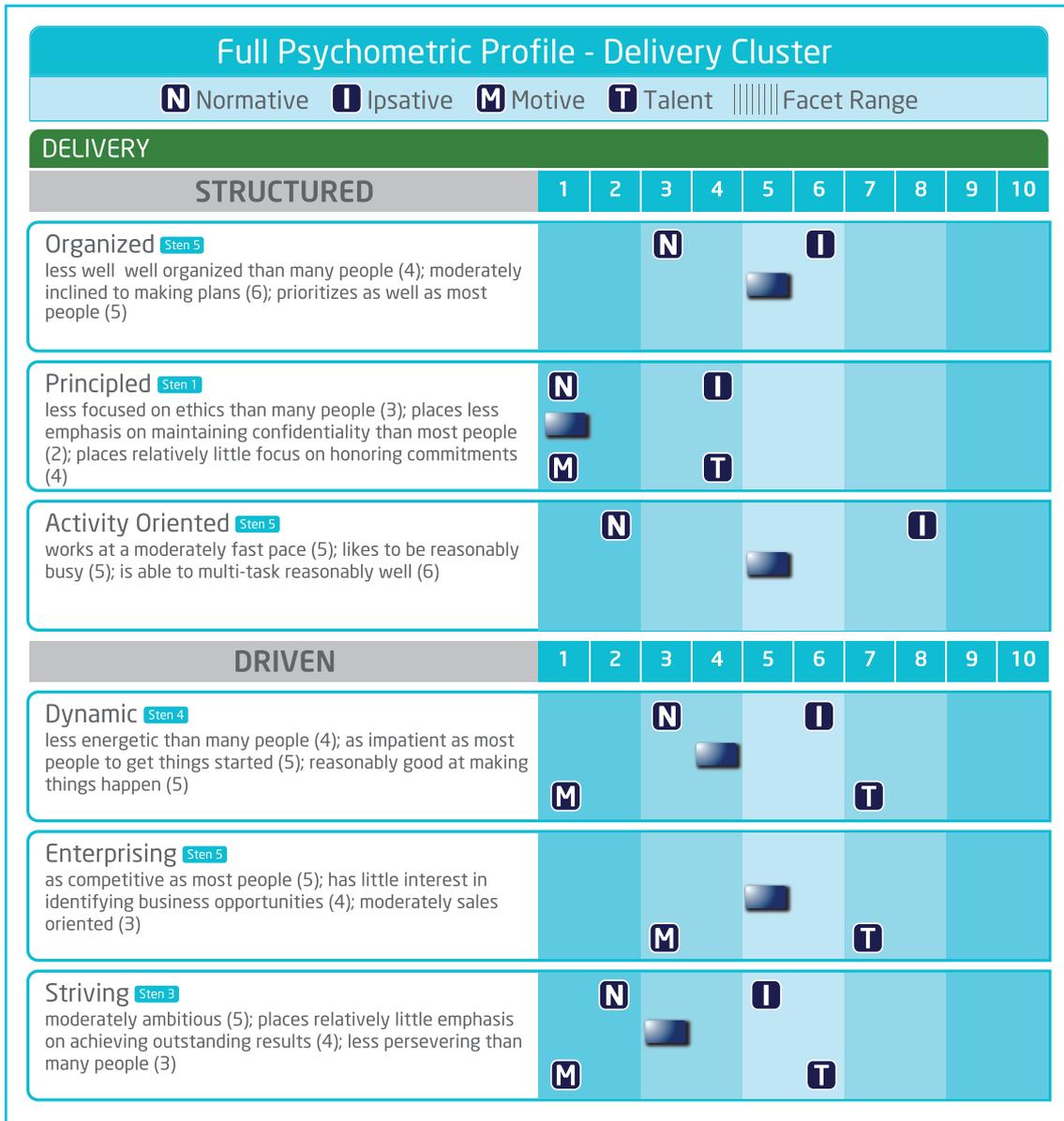
Gross distortion in a candidate's responses can manifest in an extreme Response Summary overview. See Figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2 An example of an invalid administration on the Response Summary



Such a Response Style also results in the following features on the Wave Psychometric Profile:

Figure 7.3 An example of an invalid administration on the Psychometric Profile



As can be seen from the above example, an invalid administration or attempts at distortion often result in lots of M-T splits and N-I splits on the profile.

Upon further investigation of the candidate in this example, it was found that the responses had followed a clear pattern throughout completion of the questionnaire. By looking at the detailed response pattern, it was found that the candidate had responded to items using a similar pattern across the page. An example of the individual responses to one set of items is given below.

Figure 7.4 An example of the responding pattern of a faking candidate

The screenshot shows a questionnaire titled 'Professional Styles' on page 6 of 36. It asks the user to indicate their level of agreement with six statements. The response scale is: Very Strongly Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Unsure, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, Very Strongly Agree. The candidate's responses are as follows:

Statement	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Unsure	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
I am good at dealing with uncertainty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am good at seeing how things can be improved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am good at understanding why people do things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People say I make a good first impression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am good at negotiating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am prepared to make big decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The same pattern was found across all this candidate's responses to the questionnaire.

This individual appears to be poorly motivated and probably did not even read the statements when quickly completing the questionnaire. This administration was not done in a selection setting. However, in a selection or workplace setting, where motivation is high, faking or distortion can still be detected through looking at sections such as the Response Style and Psychometric Profile for evidence of a large number of splits.