

5 Ways Assessments Can Support Your I&D Strategy

It's no secret that greater organizational diversity improves productivity and the employee experience. Back in 2015, McKinsey's 'Why Diversity Matters' report revealed organizations performing best for gender diversity and ethnic and racial diversity in management were respectively 15% and 35% more likely to have better returns.

Now in 2020, with #MeToo and #BLM movements, there is an amplified lens on Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) strategy that extends beyond the business case for improved performance metrics. Organizations need to demonstrate a fair, diverse and inclusive organizational culture.

I&D strategy extends across all areas of talent and HR, but when it comes to how you hire, build and lead your talent there are some simple ways the implementation of assessment can help.

Create a more engaging & inclusive assessment experience

When considering applying for a role, candidates can have concerns that bio-data on a resume alone could put them at an unfair disadvantage. Anticipating judgments may be made on things like the school they attended, or even their name, can make candidates unlikely to start or complete the application.

Creating a screening process that focuses on the behaviors, skills and abilities required for the role in a more objective way encourages candidates to apply and be more engaged in the process, as it is a fair measurement of what they can do.

We partnered with technology giant Fujitsu on the assessment of their graduates, where they had experienced challenges maintaining a diverse talent pool, with half of all incomplete applications coming from BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) candidates. We worked with the business to create a custom immersive Situational Judgment Test (SJT) and implemented an aptitude test measuring verbal, numerical and abstract reasoning skills. The introduction of this blended solution assessing behaviors and abilities was successful in yielding selection results that were far more fair than ever before:

- 19% increase in complete applications from BAME candidates
- 8% increase in complete applications from female candidates
- 20% increase in the proportion of candidates gaining a place on the graduate rotation who had received free school meals as a child

Just as important, both elements of the selection process were assessed for adverse impact and showed none.

[See Full Case Study](#)

Including valid, reliable assessments in your screening process can positively impact the diversity and social mobility of your applicant pool.

Focus on what matters to the role

It is critical to get stakeholder agreement on 'what good looks like' for the role at the start of any process. Many job descriptions have been shown to have biases in the way they are worded and constructed, and some organizations can struggle to articulate what is required in a way that can be objectively measured.

There are a number of ways assessment can support this step. Online job analysis questionnaires gather insight from key stakeholders including current incumbents, peers and managers to rate how important key predictors of performance are to a role. A report summarizing the given responses can help to guide the job analysis conversation in a fair and reliable way.

Johnson & Johnson used our role-fit technology to select and rank competencies to create a desired role profile. Assessment tools could then be selected that were in line with what needed to be measured for the role. Intelligent and objective algorithms created a job fit score, allowing Johnson & Johnson to be smarter and more targeted with what they were assessing.

Find Out More in this Short Video

Assessment can help bridge the crucial gap between what is required to be successful in a role and the ability to measure it objectively, fairly and defensibly.

Balance opportunity for bias

There will always be value in getting to know a candidate in an interview setting during the hiring process. Including an assessment creates a standardized method to help guide this stage of the process, as well as help interviewers navigate where to probe in challenge areas and where to verify strengths.

With an in-person setting there is always an opportunity for unconscious bias to creep in. This can include the halo/horn effect where a positive or negative rapport might be established in the interview which could then in turn affect how highly that candidate is rated on competencies needed for the role. Another bias that we often see in an interview setting is called recency effect; this occurs when a recruiter may have a stronger bias towards a candidate they saw first or last in the interview process.

Using a data-driven approach and structured interview guides that are generated from assessment results can help in not only focusing on what is most important to the role, but also bringing an extra layer of objectivity when evaluating and scoring performance - thus, helping to mitigate the potential for bias.

Check out our Interview Guide

Using assessment data as part of the selection interviews can keep the rationale for decision making focused on what is important to the role.

Interacting with the candidate is an important part of the hiring process and is not

something that assessments are meant to replace - rather, they are to complement each other. Assessment results can provide areas in which an interviewer should seek to verify and probe during a conversation.

Saville's personality assessments generate a dynamic interview guide which include questions an interviewer can use to better understand a candidate's talent and motives. In using an interview guide that holds questions based on assessment results, the interviewer can glean a better understanding of who the candidate is in a shorter amount of time.

Pinpoint Potential

Attracting, screening and selecting a diverse talent pool is important, but for an organization to be truly inclusive, this needs to be developed and maintained over time.

Assessment can play a key role in ensuring the identification of hi-potentials, development of talent and succession planning decisions are fair and objective.

Often there is a tendency to identify potential in others that are similar to oneself. This has the danger of creating a succession of "mini-me's," which is detrimental to building a diverse workforce. Performance reviews can also be susceptible to bias based on personal working relationships and can focus too much on what has been done in the past (performance), rather than what is needed for the future (potential).

A personality assessment can give managers an objective measure to use, alongside performance review data to make high potential identification and succession planning processes more fair and inclusive. Performance 360 rater questionnaires help streamline the collection of this insight in a data-driven way, giving a powerful perspective of performance and potential, as well as perception and reputation.

Assessments can help put a spotlight on potential for development, ensuring talent which may have been overlooked is considered and included.

Supporting the wider workforce

For organizations to engender a truly inclusive and diverse culture, the responsibility cannot sit with HR alone; and the opportunity for better practices must be accessible for all. Organizations should look for opportunities to partner with vendors who have solutions available for non-expert users and that managers can incorporate into their everyday activity with their teams.

Saville Assessment offers a range of reports and supporting user guides to ensure the responsibility for better talent management is distributed to all relevant stakeholders within an organization, regardless of their background and experience.

Engage the wider workforce with a commitment to better I&D with robust and powerful assessment solutions that can be used by all.

The purpose of assessments are to add objectivity, reliability and fairness as part of the hiring and development process. The value of these tools brings a valid and robust way to add another datapoint in the calibration of one's potential. This can help ensure the best talent is identified, as well as reduce the opportunity for pre-disposed biases to creep in –

Saville Assessment

Willis Towers Watson 

thus creating a more diverse and effective workforce.

Saville Assessment, a Willis Towers Watson company has been recognized by industry experts for its commitment to inclusion and diversity in the workplace:

“The winners deserved their award due to a commitment to increasing diversity and inclusion opportunities throughout its client base and displaying a masterful use of technology. They were consistently the highest-rated thought leaders in the category.”

Recruiter Awards Judging Panel - 2019 Recruitment Industry Supplier of the Year

All of our assessment solutions are grounded in driving the most powerful form of prediction. **Contact us** to find out how we can help you power an integrated talent strategy and deliver better I&D outcomes globally