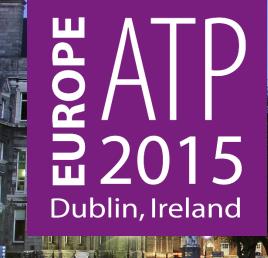EUROPE ATP 2015
Dublin, Ireland

Soft Skills Assessment:
Applications and Opportunities in the Talent Lifecycle

John Weiner, PSI Services LLC
Penny Moyle, OPP
Robert McHenry, OPP

Introduction

- Assessment plays an important role throughout the Talent Lifecycle

- Soft skills assessments are gaining attention among educators, employers and credentialing orgs

Educate

Develop

Train

Select

Credential

Promote

Today's Session

- *Surveying the landscape of soft skills assessment* - Weiner

- *Case Studies for assessing soft skills in HR* - Moyle

- *The future of talent assessment*

   - McHenry

- Discussion

Key questions addressed

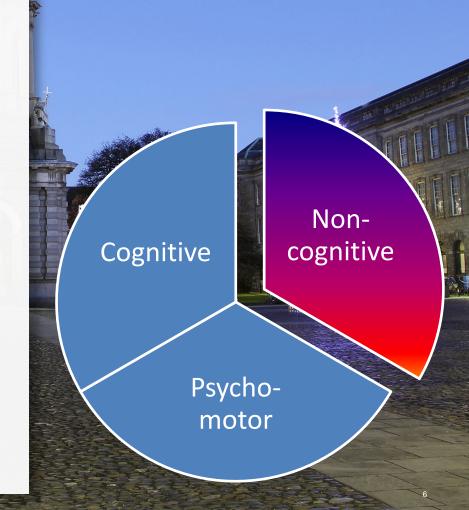Drawing from PSI's experience as a test developer and publisher, including **ViewPoint™** series

- What are soft skills?
- Why are they important?
- How are they assessed?
- How are SS assessments used?
- What are key considerations?

What are soft skills?

- Human performance can be classified into major domains

  - Cognitive - KSAs

  - Psychomotor- performance

  - Non-cognitive - traits and behaviors that reflect them

Cognitive

Non-cognitive

Psycho-motor

What are soft skills?

- *Soft skills are surface level behaviors that reflect latent personality traits and characteristics.*

Soft Skills

Competencies
Skills
Knowledge

Interests
Motivation
Attitudes
Abilities
Traits

The Iceberg Model of human characteristics (*Reynolds & Weiner, 2009*)
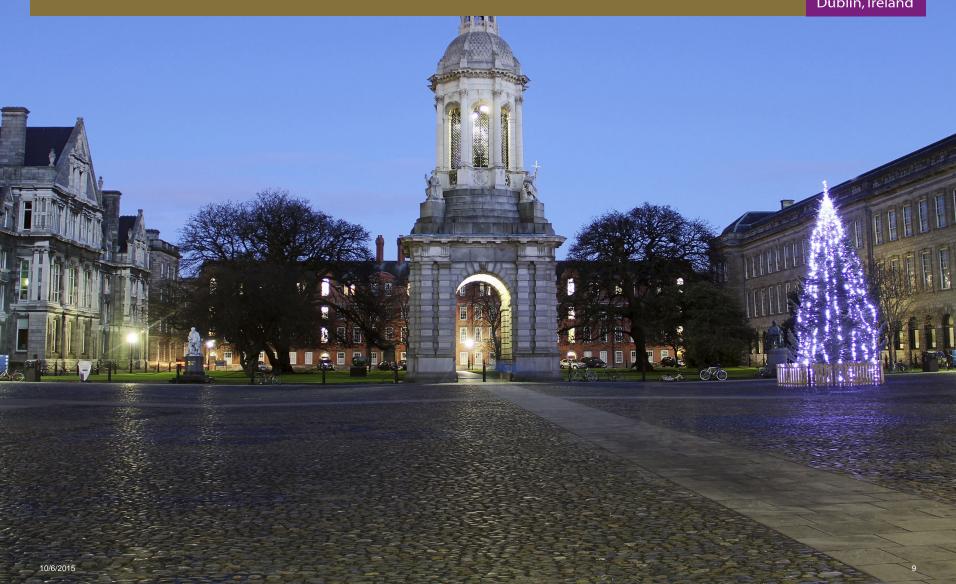
Example

Accept constructive criticism

Collaborate with team members

Assist people who are different from you

Agreeableness (trait)

Why are soft skills important?

- Government studies have mapped the world of work

  - For example, US Dept of Labor (o*net) – noncognitive domains make up 45% of worker characteristics used to describe over 1,000 occupations

  - Noncogs are rated high in importance, especially Conscientiousness

Abilities (51)	Work Styles (15)	Work Values (21)	Interests (6)
• Verbal • Reasoning • Quantitative • Memory • Perceptual • Spatial • Psycho-motor	• Achievement Orientation • Social Influence • Interpersonal Orientation • Adjustment • Conscientiousness • Practical Intelligence	• Achievement • Work Conditions • Recognition • Relationships • Support • Independence	• Realistic • Investigative • Artistic • Social • Enterprising

Occupational Success

- Cumulative research (meta-analyses) indicate that noncog measures predict job performance across jobs and settings
  - Big-5 framework used to summarize hundreds of studies
  - r ranges from low teens to ~.30 (mostly incremental to cog tests)
  - Ranked comparison of noncog tests in predicting job performance (Sackett & Walmsley, 2014)

Dimension	Task Performance	Org Citizenship	Counter-productive behavior	Overall Performance	Avg. Rank
Conscientiousness	1	1	1.5	1	1.1
Agreeableness	3.5	2	1.5	3	2.5
Emotional Stability	3.5	3	3	2.5	3.0
Extraversion	2	4	4.5	2	3.1
Openness	5	5	4.5	5	4.9

Career Readiness

- Recent studies have identified soft skill gaps in student readiness for work

  - National Research Council (2012): *Education for Life and Work: Developing Transferable Knowledge and Skills in the 21st Century*

  - University of London Institute of Education (2013): *The impact of non-cognitive skills on outcomes for young people: Lit. review*

- 21st Century skills important for success (NRC)

  - Intrapersonal competencies: **flexibility, initiative, appreciation for diversity,** and **meta-cognition**.

  - Interpersonal competencies: **communication, collaboration, responsibility,** and **conflict resolution**

How are soft skills assessed?

- Self-report Instruments
  - Attitude/opinion, self-description, admission, situation –
  - Typically more rigorous measurement of specific constructs
  - **ViewPoint™ series   - work, service, sales, tenure, pro/mgr**
- Situational Judgment Tests
  - Examinee evaluates optional responses to a scenario
  - Can be designed to measure a range of KSAOs - commonly used to measure interpersonal skills, teamwork, leadership
  - Multimedia formats increasingly popular
    - **PSI Sales, Service, Team Member, Leader SJTs**
- Role-play exercises, simulations, and behavioral interviews
  - Examinee participates in scenario and demonstrates behavior, takes action

How are soft skill tests used?

- Widely used in HCM

  - *Individual level*: screen, select, develop, coach

  - *Org level*: talent review, succession planning, HiPos

  - Emphasis on predicting performance

- Growing use in Career Readiness and Development

  - Education, training & assessment

  - Tend to focus on behavior related to competencies

  - Emphasis on behavior (malleable)

What are key considerations?

- Purpose of assessment is key driver in soft skills assessment – select vs. develop

- Report types, users, uses, user qualifications

- Use with other instruments

- Deployment and security – what's at stake?

- Faking, coaching to answers

- Language Translation – cultural adaptation

References

National research Council (2012): *Education for Life and Work: Developing Transferable Knowledge and Skills in the 21st Century*

Reynolds, D. & Weiner, J. (2009). *Online Recruiting and Selection: Innovations in Talent Acquisition*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Sackett, P.R. and Walmsley, P.T. (2014) Which personality attributes are most important in the workplace? *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 9(5). 538-551.

University of London Institute of Education (2013): *The impact of non-cognitive skills on outcomes for young people: Lit. review*

Self-report personality questionnaires

Big 5 Trait-based Model

- Comprehensive **measures** of personality domain
  - Extraversion
  - Openness (Independence)
  - Agreeableness (Tough-mindedness)
  - Conscientiousness (Self-control)
  - Emotional stability (Anxiety)

Other personality assessments

- Type Indicators
- Relationship needs
- Team roles
- Emotional Intelligence
- Conflict Styles

Very useful for **personal development** applications

Competency Model

Intellectual

- Analytical problem-solving
- Innovation
- Strategic vision
- Commercial awareness
- Clear written communication
- Technological orientation

Drive and resilience

- Drive for excellent results
- Customer focus
- Continuous learning
- Coping with pressure
- Initiative
- Flexibility
- Decision-making
- Planning and organising
- Reliability

Interpersonal

- Co-operative teamwork
- Influencing
- Clear oral communication
- Management of others
- Integrity and respect for others

Case Studies

Recruitment and Selection

- Fast food restaurant managers

- EgonZehnder

- ACCO Brands

Development applications

- NHS

- Siemens

- DVLA

Recruitment

- Reviewed differences between the top and bottom quintiles of fast food restaurant managers

  - Drive for excellence

  - Customer focus

  - Reliability

  - Low scorers were better

    - Innovation

    - Strategic vision

    - Flexibility

- Identified highest performers 66% of the time

  - Significantly better than interviews, work performance scores, length of job experience, currently used psychological questionnaire

Recruitment and selection

Personality assessment 'provided us with a deeper level of insight around our established assessment framework'

James Martin
Consultant Partner

'We have found the 16PF discussion to be both accurate and enjoyable for our candidates – client feedback has been incredibly positive'

Amy-Jo Walton
Senior Assessment and Development
*   Consultant*

EgonZehnder

Executive Search

- 400+ consultants
- 41 countries
- 16PF as a 'hypothesis-generation tool'
- Personality as an additional lens

From Hiring to development

"By using a data-driven process rather than gut instincts, we knew we could raise the quality or new hires and show results to senior executives, thereby demonstrating the value of HR to the organization"

Irma Long
Director, Global Talent Acquisitions,
ACCO Brands

ACCO BRANDS

- 6000 employees
- 100 countries

Impact of Competency approach

16PF supports the entire employment life-cycle

- Hiring
- Evaluation
- Coaching
- Development

New hire performance jumped from 74% to 89%

Retention of key employees jumped from 70% to 82%

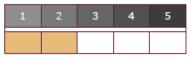*Christina Thompson, Director, Talent Management, ACCO Brands*

Disciplined Execution
Critical Thinking
Living Our Values
Externally Focused
Teamwork
Adaptability
Creativity & Innovation

ACCO® BRANDS

Interview Questions

Competency Report
Interview questions

Ella Explorer
November 1, 2011

Interview questions

Interpersonal

Cooperative Teamwork

1	2	3	4	5
▨	▨			

Result: Marginal fit

Description

Cooperative teamworking means building supportive relationships within a team, based on trust and respect. It requires listening to each other, adapting to other people's different work styles and focusing on shared goals. It also means being willing to challenge others and to accept challenge as a way of getting the best results for the team.

Questions

Tell me about how you built strong working relationships in your current/last job.

- In what way did you need support from this group?
- How did you indicate an interest in building relationships with your colleagues?
- How did you manage situations where a high level of trust was required?
- Tell me how you provided others with feedback.
- How would others describe your energy levels and patience?

Give an example of when you have had to manage a difficult relationship at work.

- How did you collaborate with others to solve this problem?
- In what way did you want to support this person?
- What positive expectations did you have about this particular person?
- Could you have been more sensitive to the other person in this situation?
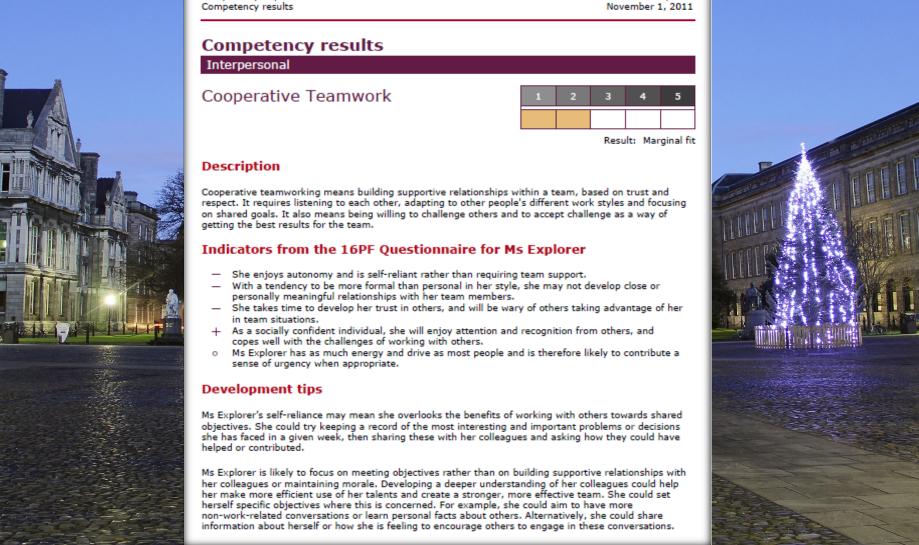- How patient were you in resolving this issue?

Competency-based feedback

Competency Report
Competency results

Ella Explorer
November 1, 2011

Competency results

Interpersonal

Cooperative Teamwork

1	2	3	4	5

Result: Marginal fit

Description

Cooperative teamworking means building supportive relationships within a team, based on trust and respect. It requires listening to each other, adapting to other people's different work styles and focusing on shared goals. It also means being willing to challenge others and to accept challenge as a way of getting the best results for the team.

Indicators from the 16PF Questionnaire for Ms Explorer

— She enjoys autonomy and is self-reliant rather than requiring team support.
— With a tendency to be more formal than personal in her style, she may not develop close or personally meaningful relationships with her team members.
— She takes time to develop her trust in others, and will be wary of others taking advantage of her in team situations.
+ As a socially confident individual, she will enjoy attention and recognition from others, and copes well with the challenges of working with others.
o Ms Explorer has as much energy and drive as most people and is therefore likely to contribute a sense of urgency when appropriate.

Development tips

Ms Explorer's self-reliance may mean she overlooks the benefits of working with others towards shared objectives. She could try keeping a record of the most interesting and important problems or decisions she has faced in a given week, then sharing these with her colleagues and asking how they could have helped or contributed.

Ms Explorer is likely to focus on meeting objectives rather than on building supportive relationships with her colleagues or maintaining morale. Developing a deeper understanding of her colleagues could help her make more efficient use of her talents and create a stronger, more effective team. She could set herself specific objectives where this is concerned. For example, she could aim to have more non-work-related conversations or learn personal facts about others. Alternatively, she could share information about herself or how she is feeling to encourage others to engage in these conversations.

Succession planning

> 21, 000 employees in UK in 20 businesses

> Identify and develop high potential senior managers

> MBTI and 16PF assessments to supplement 2-day simulation

> In-depth development reports used to supplement decision-making around future promotion and to help incumbents adjust to their new roles

SIEMENS

Leadership Development

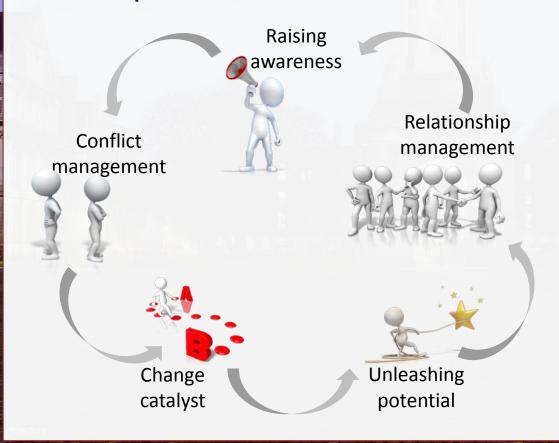- 1.7m employees (5th largest in world)

- Two-day program

- 16PF, MBTI and FIRO-B providing multiple perspectives in one-to-one leadership coaching

- Concrete ideas about how to re-shape career path

Building management skills

Goal: more effective staff interaction

5 development modules

Raising awareness

Relationship management

Conflict management

Change catalyst

Unleashing potential

DVLA®

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

'a programme to get under the surface of behaviour'

Adrian Thomas, L&D Strategy and Communications Manager

10/6/2015

EUROPE ATP 2015 Dublin, Ireland

The future of talent assessment

Robert McHenry, OPP

Credential represented as an open badge

Hard skills badges

CareerClover

Get help choosing your career with CareerClover. Our career test, 16PF® questionnaire, has been trusted by millions of professionals for over 60 years. Your accurate results can be used to help you identify your work-style, key strengths, company culture preferences and ultimately help you to land your ideal job.

TOP BADGES   View all ›

Job Competency: Continuous Learning (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover	Job Competency: Strategic Vision (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover
Job Competency: Drive for Excellence (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover	Job Competency: Analytical Problem-Solving (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover
Job Competency: Innovation (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover	Job Competency: Flexibility (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover
Job Competency: Customer Focus (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover	Job Competency: Influential Communication (Assessed by 16PF®) CareerClover

ACCEPTED ON 30 AUG 2015
Job Competency: Strategic Vision (Assessed by 16PF®)
Earned by Salsabila Anzani

ACCEPTED ON 30 AUG 2015
Job Competency: Drive for Excellence (Assessed by 16PF®)
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Job Competency: Analytical Problem-Solving (Assessed by 16PF®)
Earned by Salsabila Anzani

ACCEPTED ON 29 AUG 2015
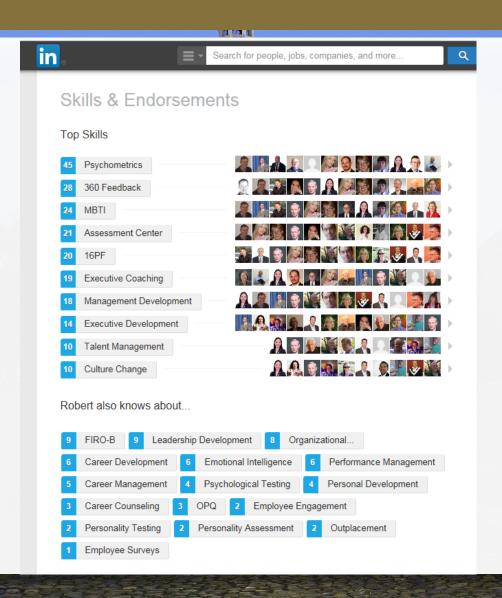Job Competency: Strategic Vision (Assessed by 16PF®)
Earned by Natalie Terenzi

Strategic vision, reliability, planning and organizing, managing others, integrity and respect, innovation, initiative, flexibility, driven, decision-making, Customer focus, teamwork, continuous learner, problem solving

LinkedIn endorsements

Joy Carter

Chief executive

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Project Management

Risk Management

Sales and marketing

Supply Chain / Service Delivery

Procurement

Managing Crisis Situations

Performance Improvements

PERSONAL SUMMARY

Strong managerial background with senior level local / international experience and cross sector exposure. Good strategic appreciation and vision, able to build and implement sophisticated plans with a proven track record explicitly supporting business needs. Self driven and self reliant, sets aims and targets and leads by example, collaborative approach with good interpersonal skills to engage, motivate and encourage others through change.

Highly focused with a consistent track record of successfully delivering full lifecycle implementations to tight time scales and within budget. Joy is currently looking to continue a career in a senior management position at home or abroad.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Barton's Advertising Agency – Coventry
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER   June 2008 - Present

Visual digital resume/CV

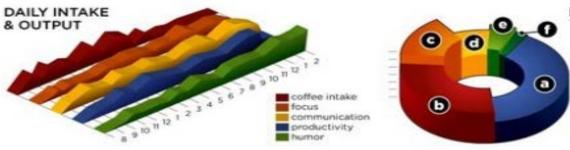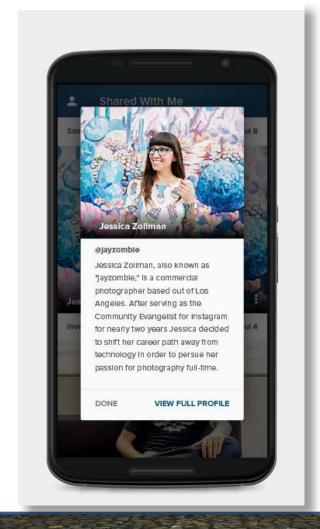# LMO digital recruitment

- LMO "snapped" a series of standard interview questions. What three words best describe you?

- Share a recent ad trend that you've heard about.

- And lastly, a video of CEO Chris Laughlin asking why prospective interns want to work at LMO

Using Instagram for a job application

Wearables

Google Glass

EEG measurement

Smart (badge) wearable

- "the depth and distinctiveness of profiles that can be built ...is startling. Using just data gathered from wearable devices, it is possible to build rich behavioural and lifestyle profiles of individuals ..."

- "This work reinforces the need for businesses to work within a social contract to collect and use this type of data sensitively and appropriately."
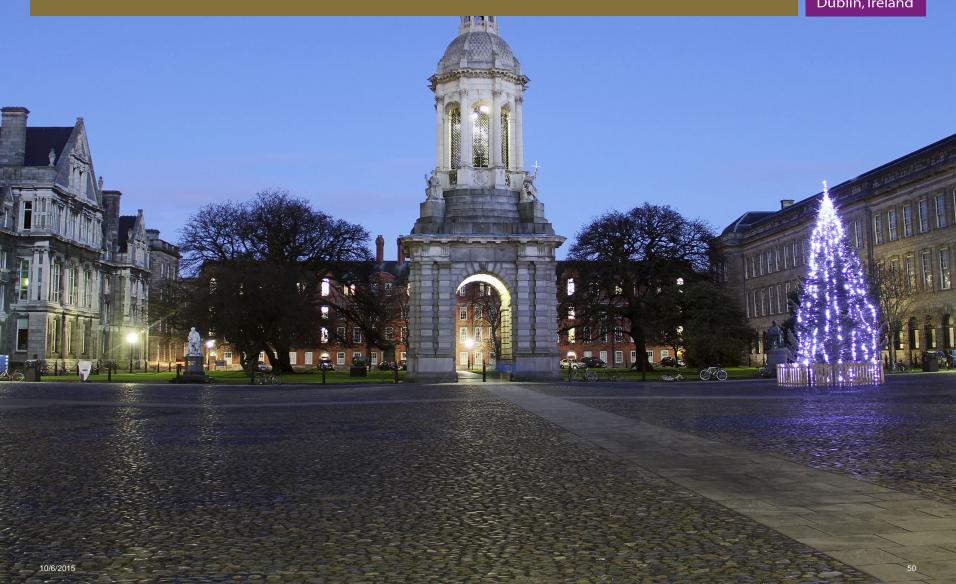
- Dr Chris Brauer

Some smartphone facts

- 58% adults in US and Europe own a Smart phone
- In 2014, in US 9M workers conducted a job search on a Smart phone
- When given a choice, 31% preferred a Smart phone to a PC for taking an assessment: Black, Hispanic ,Female and entry level most especially

Discussion

What are emerging trends?

- HCM
    - Use of multimedia SJT to assess soft skills
    - Soft skills training (e.g., US DoL)
- Career Readiness
    - Increasing interest in curriculum and assessment to complement cognitive learning
- Professional Competency
    - Interest in "noncognitive competence" (ICE whitepaper)
    - Pre-credential training (medical, healthcare)
    - Self-development, eLearning + assessment, badging

Thank you

For further information contact:

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