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Psychological TESTING

The essential guide to using and surviving
the most popular recruitment and career
development tests



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Stephanie Jones

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Psychological Testing

The essential guide to using and surviving the
most popular recruitment and career
development tests

by Dr Stephanie Jones

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About the Author

Dr Stephanie Jones is Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior at Maastricht School of Management (MSM), and also acts as Academic Co-ordinator for Doctoral Programmes. She gained her PhD from University College London and Bachelor's degree from the London School of Economics.

She has taught on the MBA program of MSM in Maastricht, Kuwait, Egypt, Yemen, China, Vietnam, Rwanda, Ghana, Malawi, Suriname, Peru and Kazakhstan.

Dr Jones previously managed consulting (including recruiting) and training businesses in the UK, Hong Kong, China, India, Australia and Dubai. She has also taught for the Universities of Exeter, Cranfield and Leicester in the UK.

Dr Jones has authored more than 25 books on business and management, including on the subjects of psychology, leadership, culture, recruitment, career development and expatriation.

When not travelling around the world teaching, she spends her time researching and writing from her holiday home and boat in Malta.

Preface to the Second Edition, 2010

Despite the changes in almost every aspect of life as we know it over the last fifteen years, I was pleasantly surprised at how much of *Psychological Testing for Managers* (this book's original title) still seemed to be fresh and contemporary. We have even just been through another recession! The most popular psychological tests are still commonly used, but everything is now online. With this new edition, prompted by Louise Hinchey of Harriman House, I have had the exciting opportunity to bring new tests, and new versions of old tests, to a new generation of human resources managers (personnel is another relic of the 1980s and 1990s), job seekers and other interested parties. Enjoy! (I don't think we said that fifteen years ago, either.)

Dr Stephanie Jones

The Happy Return, Malta, 2010

Preface to the First Edition, 1993

The idea behind this book came from my work in researching and writing about various aspects of the corporate human resources world. Over the last few years I have looked in some detail at executive search and selection, interim management and outplacement, all of which make use of psychological testing as a tool to help match people to particular jobs and career opportunities. Psychological testing is increasingly common in the workplace. As a result, I wanted to find out more about it, especially about the different tests, how they are used and what they reveal.

However, all the books that I could find about occupational psychology, and psychological and psychometric testing, were written by professional psychologists, and seemed full of technical jargon and incomprehensible detail. These books were largely about models and theories of personality. They referred occasionally to specific tests, but without explaining what they were like, either from the point of view of the person being tested, or the user of tests.

If you knew you would have to undergo psychological tests in order to be selected for a job, or as part of an appraisal for promotion or transfer, wouldn't you want to know what the tests might entail? If you had not done a test before, you might feel at a disadvantage to someone who had.

Similarly, personnel managers or human resources directors without a background in psychology may be interested in using psychological tests, but have hesitated in the past through lack of knowledge. Many employers know very little about the range of tests available and depend either on second-hand recommendations or opt for the most commonly used tests without an awareness of the alternatives. Training courses are available but may be inconvenient, time-consuming or expensive.

I would like to emphasise that *Psychological Testing for Managers* is absolutely *not* the last word on the subject, but is an introduction for the non-psychologist, both as testee and user. It looks at a selection of the most commonly used tests in non-technical language and in a novel format, explaining what the tests involve, when they should be used, and how they can be combined with other tests to give a well-rounded picture of a potential employees' strengths and weaknesses.

I have also tried to give the reader a feel for what it is like to do these tests. To achieve this, I have taken all the tests myself, and with some I have explained the nature of the feedback in terms of my own results. After the final test, I was told that I was suffering from test-overload, and that the value of doing any more was now limited so I would not recommend any individual to do more than a few tests in close succession.

One of my first experiences of professional writing – more than 10 years ago – was as a restaurant critic, and sometimes I've jokingly referred to this book as 'The Egon Ronay Guide to Psychological Testing'. I certainly hope it will introduce you to the variety and the benefits of psychological testing, whether you are a potential user of tests, or have – or expect to have — experience of them as a candidate for a job or promotion.

If *Psychological Testing for Managers* creates a feeling of familiarity with the concepts, banishes anxiety, allows for critical comparison and provokes interest in the wider subject of occupational psychology, then this book's goals will have been achieved.

Choosing the Psychological Tests for this Book

The tests examined here represent a variety of categories and approaches with a particular focus on intelligence and personality assessments. Among the most established and respected are the Watson Glaser Critical Thinking test, Raven's Progressive Matrices, the Cattell 16PF and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. They are still widely used and have many long-term, loyal adherents. PAPI and OPQ are relatively recent developments, the latter created by SHL as a new range of tests for the management market, and must be welcomed as a major step forward in user-friendliness.

I selected these tests by talking to a number of occupational psychologists, and asking them which ones they thought were most commonly encountered. The tests included here are all widely available in the UK, the USA and parts of continental Europe. A number of them, especially the OPQ and PAPI, have also been translated into foreign languages. If you think that an especially important or useful test has been left out, please write to me and tell me about it.

Dr Stephanie Jones

Covent Garden, London, 1993

Foreword

In this invaluable new edition of *Psychological Testing*, my friend and colleague, Dr Stephanie Jones, has tried to help the non-specialist reader to prepare to use psychological tests in a clear, systematic and practical way. With her extensive experience in recruitment and HR consulting, her background in executive training, and her excellent teaching experience with our MBA and DBA students in areas such as Organisational Behaviour, Cross-cultural Management, Leadership, and Behavioural Sciences, Dr Jones fully understands user needs.

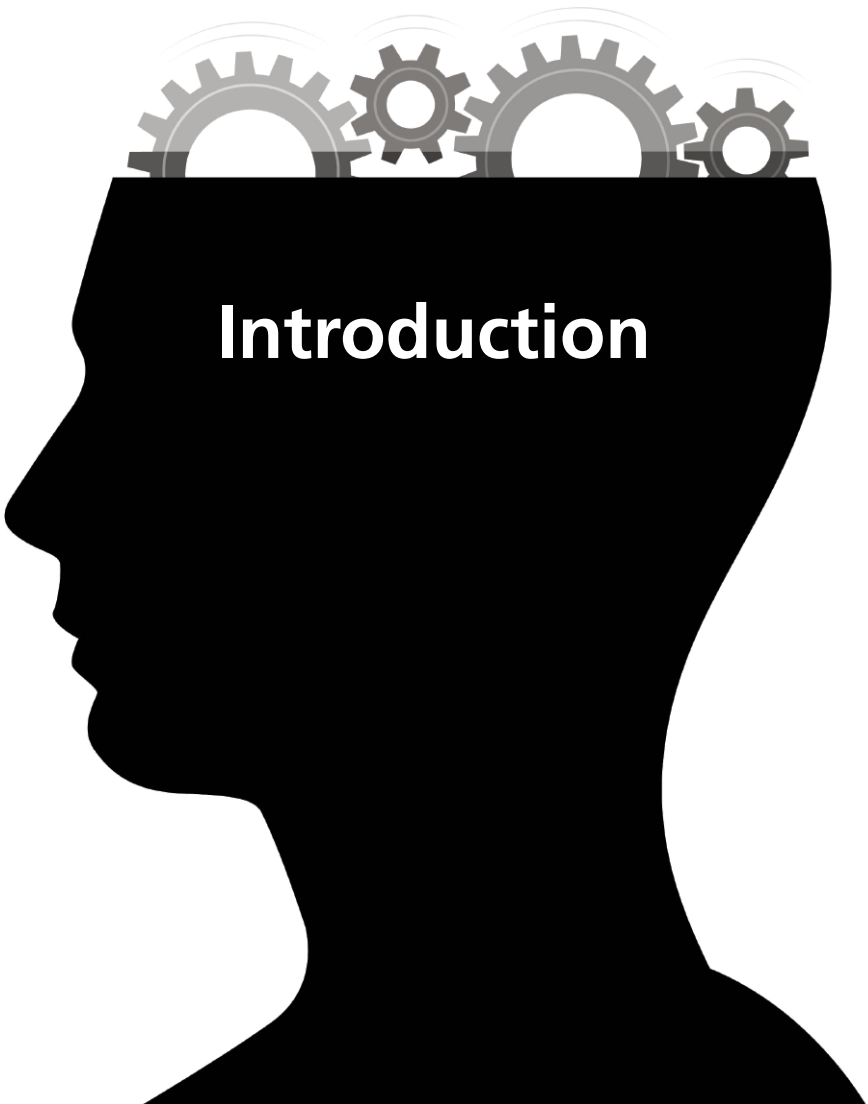
Given her expertise, she has produced a user-friendly guide to psychological testing in the workplace. Having tried and tested each of the psychological tests in this book herself, she offers her own detailed comments, aimed at taking away the fear of psychological testing and giving more confidence to the job seeker.

As academic behavioural scientists, we appreciate the importance of psychological testing in aligning employees and jobs. While many of the most popular tests have been used for decades, and have their roots in the nineteenth century, recent research in the field is producing innovative approaches to established psychological testing techniques, which can give us valuable new insights. As academics we must not forget the importance of making our work accessible to the general reader who has practical reasons for using psychological testing, but who might lack the background to understand reports on the psychometric qualities of the tests. With a clear focus on practical use, this book is not intended to be the last word on the psychometric qualities of each specific test; rather it is designed to help the reader looking for a useful starting point to find out more about psychological testing. Moreover, the book points the reader towards additional resources, including opportunities to practice tests online.

Psychological tests can be a very valuable tool but they must be used and interpreted carefully and correctly. This practical

introduction can be an important first step in professional psychological test usage. Much of my own academic research has been in the field of careers and employability of workers. Knowing more about yourself and/or about your subordinates' (personality) profiles, using the carefully selected psychological tests included in this book, can be a good beginning in a process that is aimed at changing and developing your career. Obviously, in order to draw accurate conclusions on the use of specific tests, it is highly important to ask for expert advice on the psychometric qualities of the instruments used. After all, psychological testing may have profound implications for employees' careers, and should be undertaken using high ethical standards.

Professor Beatrice van der Heijden
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Netherlands and University of Twente



Introduction

Note: The world of psychological testing attributes specific meanings to specific words. Words highlighted in this section the first time they appear, such as **abstract**, are explained in the Glossary.

We all realise that, fundamentally, everyone is different. We all know people who seem to be a world away from ourselves: in their ideas, their appearance and in the way that they go about doing things. It is these differences that make people interesting and that allow us to learn from each other as we go through life. Wouldn't it be boring if everyone was the same?

It is these differences, too, which make it worthwhile for a person to look for a change in job or career, or for a company or organisation to employ someone new, so that they can bring fresh ideas or a new style of operation to a job. But it is also these differences which may mean that the job or career a person chooses is successful or not. The person the company employs may or may not be the right person for the job.

This concern is heard time and again. Letting people go is damaging and traumatic, so we have to get it right first time, and keep getting it right. Job changers are similarly cautious. A job is a precious thing, even if it has a lot of negatives, so it is important to really think about whether you are right for this new job or whether you should stay where you are?

Thus **psychometric** or psychological testing has become a vital tool in the task of minimising risk on all sides in recruitment and in career management decisions. As more and more employers use psychological testing, more and more people in the workplace will find themselves being tested, but which psychological **test(s)** should be used, in which circumstances, and why?

Which test?

This book, unlike most others on psychological testing, lists a series of tests in order to provide you – a person about to undergo psychological testing, or a potential user of tests on your own executives, managers and job candidates – with a brief introduction to a range of popular tests used frequently in a variety of organisations. It has been written with these scenarios – among others – in mind:

Testee

- You have applied for a job and, at the first interview, you are told by the headhunter or agency that the prospective employer is quite interested in you, but their practice is to put everyone through the Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Analysis. You haven't heard of this and have no idea what it might entail.
- You are approached by a headhunter and agree to discuss a possible job opportunity. The headhunter insists that in order to go on to the next stage you must undergo a battery (i.e. combination) of short psychological tests. You don't know what this means, and you don't know the names of any popular, short psychological (or less common and longer) tests to ask if these will be included.
- You are being considered for promotion to a different position in the company. It is agreed that you have the qualifications and experience to do the job, but your boss is concerned about whether you will 'fit in' with the new team. They have already gone through the Belbin Team Roles exercise and you must go through it too. What is it? Should you be worried about it?

User

- You are the manager of a small, entrepreneurial group developing new products for the parent company. It has been suggested that you should expand your operations and recruit two new members of staff, who must be self-starting, creative, risk-taking and decisive. You've heard about the use of psychological tests in selection and feel this could help here, but which test should you use?
- You are the managing director of a well-established, medium-sized company about to retire after 15 years in the job, having built the business from scratch. You have created a group of managers to run a division of the business and would like one of them to succeed you, but which one? Who has the necessary vision and leadership to take over?
- You have just started working in a small recruitment consultancy, and one of the clients asks that all candidates for his assignment should undergo a series of psychological tests. He doesn't know much about these and wants you to advise him. What do you say?

How to use the test summaries

This book looks at a range of popular psychological tests, which I have analysed and discussed in such a way as to help you answer the questions above. Other benefits include:

Testee

- If you are told that you are about to be given a certain psychological test, you can read about it and mentally prepare yourself.
- If you are told you are to be presented with a battery of tests, you can quote the names of some of the short tests described here, e.g. OPQ, PAPI, Myers Briggs, 16PF and FIRO-B, and ask if any of these are on the agenda. The odds are that at least one will be. The SHL OPQ is particularly popular as part of a battery of tests.

User

- If you need to find a certain test which show up specific qualities in individuals, you can look up the descriptions of a number of the tests to see which might be most suitable.
- If you need to recommend the use of specific tests to another person, you can discuss the most popular tests available, how they can be combined and quote the experiences of other users.

Presentation of the test summaries

The tests are presented here in a uniform format to help answer the most commonly-asked questions, from the point of view of both the testee and the user. This is based on the background to the design of the test, its aims, format and uses or applications, what it's like to do, examples of what the test looks like, time needed for taking the test, scoring and feedback, with comments on uses and value.

Background

This describes the origins of the test and examines its usage, popularity and norms.

The aims of the test

This itemises the aspects of aptitude, personality and/or ability being tested in each case.

The format

This basically describes what the test looks like, and how it is likely to be presented to you as a testee. The aim is to familiarise you with its format and offset the 'fear of the unknown'. For example, is the test ipsative or not?

Range of applications

This lists the ways in which the test can be used, particularly in terms of recruitment selection, career development, etc., for the user.

Doing the test

This tells you, as the testee, what it's like to actually do each test. It was written immediately after each one was administered, and

conveys my first impressions as well as more detailed reflections and comparisons with other tests.

Examples of content of the test

Wherever possible this section quotes actual extracts from the test. If you have not done tests before, it should help you to gain a certain amount of prior experience. Most of these tests are not easily available, and in most cases can only be sold to qualified psychologists.

Time needed to complete the test

This gives an approximate idea of how long most people take to do the test. It is useful when putting together batteries of tests and estimating scheduling times for users, and gives guidelines to those completing the test for the first time.

Time to score the test

This is helpful for the user in choosing tests that are based on the speed of obtaining results. It is necessary to know this if you want a test which can be administered, scored and the results presented to the person being tested on the same occasion. As a testee, can you reasonably expect to be given the results of the test on the spot? Computer-generated feedback is usually available instantly.

Necessary time for feedback

This is also useful for an employer or headhunter to know when scheduling a number of people to be tested, and for the person being tested. How long does the entire exercise take? Everyone being tested should insist on feedback, and knowing the average time it takes to receive that feedback on a particular test can assure you, as a testee, that you have received more, or less, feedback than usual. Computer-generated feedback is, of course, standardised and may be less useful as a result.

Format/structure of the feedback

This indicates the topics that will generally be covered in the feedback. This is a useful indication of the content of the test, and can help the user to decide if this test is appropriate for a particular use; it also helps you as the testee to know what to expect. If you feel that you are not receiving adequate feedback, then this section helps you to suggest other areas to cover.

Value to the employer/user

This summarises the value of a particular test for the user, in terms of the qualities being tested and occupational applications.

Value to the employee/person being tested

This summarises how the test helps you, as the testee, to understand your qualities in the context of the situation for which you are being tested. As an applicant if you are unsuccessful then you should still insist on receiving feedback, so that you can gain the benefit of having undergone a psychological test which might tell you something new about yourself. You might learn something which can help you in future job hunts.

Value to the user organisation

This section in particular looks at the value of the test in determining the suitability of a person for a specific corporate culture. Here, the test will be discussed in terms of how the person will fit into a 'macho' culture, a 'process' culture, a 'retail' culture, and a 'high-risk, slow-feedback' culture (discussed further below).

Can the test results be deliberately falsified?

In most cases, you will find that test results cannot be falsified, and even if they can, then the fact that they were falsified will be discovered sooner or later, to the detriment of the relationship between the employer and employee.

Of course, it is pointless trying to present yourself as having characteristics other than those you genuinely have. Many tests have built-in consistency measures, so deliberate falsification becomes quite obvious to the test administrator.

Advantages over other tests

This looks at why a particular test is preferred by users and those being tested for certain qualities, including speed of being administered, validity, the extent of validation, etc.

Disadvantage compared with other tests

This looks at the drawbacks of each test. There is certainly no such thing as the 'perfect' test, and this is why a battery of tests can be particularly valuable.

Tests may be combined with...

This suggests combinations of popular tests for specific purposes. Some tests stand up well on their own for a variety of applications, while others confirm or question the results of other tests. In most circumstances, especially in recruitment and selection, tests will be presented to candidates in a group rather than singly.

Static/predictive value

This indicates the value of the test in describing the attributes of the person being tested at the point in time when the testing exercise takes place, compared with how useful it is in indicating how the person being tested will behave in the future. Different tests have different degrees of usefulness in predicting future behaviour.

Overall review

This summarises the basic features of each test.

How to prepare yourself for sitting this test

This suggests what you should do if you are taking the test for the first time. It cannot tell you how to affect the results of the test to fit in with the impression you want to convey; on the contrary, it warns against attempting this. Instead, it suggests how you should mentally prepare yourself for answering the questions as frankly as possible so that the test can be of maximum benefit to both parties.

Will this test produce a different result after a period of time?

This section looks at the shelf-life of each test according to the results produced about one individual, suggesting when it could be repeated. If you are being tested for a particular job or promotion then you may have done that test before. If you did it less than six months ago, then the results are probably still valid. If it was much more than a year ago then you may well have to retake it.

As a testee, you should always insist on having a copy of your test results in case this happens. It can be useful for employers to know how long the results of a test are valid when planning career development. Some tests can only be done once, as part of the test is the novelty of doing them. Experiencing them a second time would lose this unique value.

The best way of using this book is to derive an overview of the most popular tests, and then look at individual tests in detail as required, either as a testee or user. Further information on particular tests can be obtained from the books listed in Further Reading (p.221), and by contacting the organisations listed on page 227.

Psychology at work

Management theorists have, for many years, argued that effective management is only possible through an understanding of employees' personalities and behavioural styles, as well as their working situations. Research also shows that a 'person-centred' rather than 'production-centred' management style produces better, and more effective, business results in the long term.

Therefore, in the field of personnel selection, team-building and career development, identifying the way in which an employee differs from others, is considered important. To do this we need tools which will allow us to look at different aspects of personality, and which will give us an indication of how someone is likely to react in certain circumstances. If they are under stress, or in a situation which demands a high level of tact and diplomacy, they may behave differently. In short, what we need is a model or series of models which can be used to help managers understand their employees better and adjust their management style accordingly.

Personality tests which use sound psychological methods can provide managers with information relating to basic aspects of personality, so that predictions about behaviour can be made with a fair degree of confidence, including **competence** and **motivation**. This information is important when a company or organisation is making decisions about the recruitment, appraisal or development of staff, or needs to form new teams for specific tasks.

To be effective, successful and reasonably satisfied in their working environment, managers must be able to come to terms with their own psychology and that of their colleagues. If you are a senior manager, you must be able to use this knowledge and these insights to make appropriate hiring and promotion decisions.

Psychological testing will enable you to have some understanding of how you relate to others, and of how others relate to you. The age of the lone-ranger executive or manager is long over, and effectiveness is now about being able to work in teams, in almost every workplace situation.

An understanding of psychology and of psychological **profiles** should therefore be a vital ingredient in any senior manager's repertoire. This will become increasingly important as the competitive environment facing most organisations becomes more and more sophisticated.

The theories behind occupational psychology

Since the first personality tests were developed, different theories have formed the basis for specific personality tests. Typically, psychological/psychometric models of personality have identified a number of core personality traits, with the number of traits identified by any particular theory varying from two to sixteen, and in a few cases even more.

One of the earliest theories of personality, now very well known and widely adopted, is the two-factor model proposed by H. J. Eysenck in 1947. He argued that the major sources of individual personality difference could be reduced to two basic factors, each of which operated independently of the other. The first of these two factors was *Introversion* vs. *Extroversion*, and the second, *Stability* vs. *Neuroticism*. To a large extent, many personality tests on the market today relate to these basic findings of Eysenck, which in turn make use of a number of the insights of Jung and Freud.

So how did early psychologists arrive at their theories of personality? Eysenck, for example, discovered his model by gathering responses to questions about a large number of personality variables. This showed that several apparently different personality traits seemed to cluster together: an individual who scored highly on, say, acting impulsively and risk-taking would also tend to score highly on sociability and activity. To Eysenck, this implied that there was some common factor underlying these specific personality traits.

Eysenck's model, however, provided only a limited insight into human personality. Many felt that a more sophisticated model was needed, and other researchers began to produce them, ultimately leading to the creation of many of the well-known personality tests on the market today.

Warning for potential users

As the use of psychological testing has become more widespread and users have become more familiar with testing techniques, there has been a growing concern that, instead of using tests as a way of adding value to other management information sources, many users are taking advantage of the easy and inexpensive availability of psychological tests as a quick fix in their human resources decisions. Companies are sometimes using tests as a substitute for making carefully thought-through management decisions rather than as an aid to such careful thinking.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that psychological tests can only aid and inform management judgement; they cannot replace it. Managers are not absolved from making difficult or easy selection and/or promotion decisions through the use of psychological tests, however skilfully they are **interpreted**. Psychological tests should never be used as a means of letting managers off the hook in making difficult choices.

Many psychologists suggest that a battery of tests can be used provided that the client is prepared to use them as part of a systematic procedure that includes a number of steps and stages, with built-in checks and balances. The client must take the time to understand the tests and what they attempt to achieve, which is often limited. The client must also be prepared to allocate the time and money for adequate explanation and feedback, whether they are successful in the selection process or not.

Psychological testing should be seen as part of the wider and continuing process of seeking to understand individuals in the context of career development and team-building, to show strengths and weaknesses, and areas for future attention. They should not be used solely for selection and then put away in the filing cabinet and eventually, inevitably, shredded. For existing employees, tests taken at various stages of their careers will always provide important insights. Recruitment and selection is only part of an employee's experience and contribution to an organisation.

What tests say about an employer

It can be revealing for prospective – or existing – employees to critically examine their company's choice and use of psychological tests. Which particular tests do they prefer? Do they tend to use just one or two, or several? Are they modified or entirely changed from time to time, or is there a long tradition of using only tried and tested **instruments**? Are controlled and user-friendly conditions provided for those undergoing the tests? Most importantly, how much preliminary information and post-test feedback is provided? Are the employees given a copy of their interpreted results, and assured that any other copies are confidentially and securely locked away?

A company's attitude to psychological testing reveals much about how progressive, caring and committed they are to the importance of their human resource assets. This insight can be very useful in helping a prospective employee to decide whether or not to join a company, and those administering the tests should be aware of this.

Ideally, a company using psychological testing as a recruitment and development procedure will, in the process, heighten its employees' perceptions of its care and approach to developing management excellence. When a company has to make a decision between candidates for a position, and when it is clear that they cannot all be successful, those who are turned away – or, preferably, come to an agreement that this specific opportunity is not for them at this particular time – should retain a favourable impression of the organisation.

A well-chosen battery of psychological tests – with extensive feedback for each test-taker – combined with a thoughtfully conducted personal interview, will achieve this objective, with both successful and unsuccessful candidates coming away from the experience feeling positive. Selection procedures should be carefully designed to fit the job and the characteristics of the person being sought.

It should never be forgotten that the recruitment process is also all about marketing the company, in public relations terms. The most sensitive PR audience for any company is the group of people who were unsuccessful in applying for jobs there: what will they say about the company in the market place? They will certainly have an opinion, and the employer should go to some lengths to ensure that it is an accurate – and overall, positive – one.

Going for a job is very much a two-way process, and the unsuccessful applicants will take away with them an impression of how they were handled that cannot be rectified later. It can be easy for them to badmouth the company and justify their rejection, especially if HR processes are poor. Psychological testing can be an important part of these processes.

Companies with long traditions of using psychological testing enjoy the cumulative benefits of having built up a large databank of normative data, based on a past population of test-takers, and can develop a picture of their ‘employee most likely to succeed’ against a given job specification. This encourages clarity and disciplined thinking about matching people with jobs. The careful use of well-chosen psychological tests has become, over the last half-century, the hallmark of a good employer.

The acceptability of psychological tests

Some of the tests most favoured by many employers and candidates are not deemed scientifically valid or reliable by psychologists. Some tests are well-received because of their strong face validity – or user-friendliness – and are often very useful as a counselling tool, even though they are not seen as valid in a scientific sense.

It is important to remember the distinctions between scientific validity, scientific reliability and face validity. Tests which are scientifically valid and reliable can lack face validity and thus appear pointless. If no one wants to do the test because it seems to be a waste of time and they can't see the thinking behind it, it has failed the public relations test, however scientifically proven it may be.

The acceptability of psychological tests has increased greatly through the use of computer technology, and the effect of this on the candidate-tester relationship. The tester is no longer the person who administers and scores the test; instead, he or she is the person who explains the point of it at the outset, and debriefs afterwards. The candidate is interacting with the computer screen, which then helps them to come to terms with the tester as an objective party.

Much of the traditional fear of psychologists, especially in the British context, stemmed originally from the 1940s War Office procedure of sending all officer candidates for 'an interview with the psychologist'. This was interpreted by many to mean **psychiatrist**, and therefore 'shrink'. Even now, the distinction between the two is imperfectly understood. The fear of being mentally undressed by this individual was particularly heightened by the characteristic British sense of reserve (not unknown to many other cultures), provoking a typical 'stiff-upper-lip' reaction. The psychologist/psychiatrist was not seen as a human being just doing his or her job, but as a holder of secret weapons which would be

used to lay bare the defenceless individual's inner soul. There was no hiding place!

The widespread use of computer technology in psychological testing has helped to mitigate this legacy of fear and apprehension. The candidate uses various computer programs to gain self-knowledge, and then sees the psychologist afterwards, who will help with the interpretation. The psychologist's role is developmental, not judgmental. The computer has liberated the candidate to remain a person, and liberated the psychologist to be a counsellor. Those readers now in their twenties and thirties might find this difficult to imagine.

Matching people to company cultures

It is important to bear in mind models of company cultures when assessing psychological tests and the types of personality they define. One of the principal purposes of using psychological testing effectively is to select people to work in certain cultures, or to understand why people are effective or not effective in their existing company. The model of company cultures outlined here has been used to appraise the value of certain psychological tests in the following test summaries, especially in terms of looking at the ‘value of the test to the user organisation’.

There are many models of company cultures but the following simple model of four types from the Ashridge Management College is useful. This classifies all companies into four types:

1. The **macho** culture;
2. The **process** culture;
3. The **retail** culture;
4. The **high-risk, slow-feedback** culture.

The macho culture attracts individualistic, high-risk operators who like quick feedback of their results; people who will find a mountain and climb it. Many consultancies and advertising agencies have macho cultures, and this group would also include magazine companies and newspaper companies.

Process cultures include local authorities and capital goods manufacturers; companies in which technical expertise is very important. Process cultures are concerned with how the work is done and attention to detail, and often the customer and end-users are not particularly important. The method of working, however, is all important, and people in process cultures tend to focus on the actual process of their work.

In a retail culture, people work hard and play hard, and are very customer-driven. This culture favours fast action but low risk with frenetic activity selling high-demand products, such as hamburgers: for example McDonald's. There are strict, specifically laid-down rules; decision-making is easy, and feedback is rapid.

This is in considerable contrast with a high-risk, slow-feedback culture such as the aircraft industry, and design-oriented capital goods companies such as Rolls Royce. It can take seven or eight years of research to create a new aircraft engine, and even then someone else might make a better one. It can take a long time to find out if the decisions made will turn out to have been the right ones.

It is essential to consider these company culture differences when matching people to job roles. Each psychological test considered here is examined in terms of its value in indicating the extent to which a person will or will not fit into a specific organisational culture. See, under each test, the section entitled 'Value of the Test to the User Organisation'.

Other models of organisational culture should also be considered, such as Charles Handy's plus others quoted in *Organisational Behaviour* textbooks (see Further Reading). Are people comfortable in a Power culture dominated by a spider in a web; or in a Role culture, with strong departmental pillars? Do they prefer task-based work, or an organisation revolving around them as an individual? Looking at the issue in a different way, are they attracted to a market-driven or entrepreneurial culture? Or do they feel more comfortable in a clan-culture or bureaucracy?

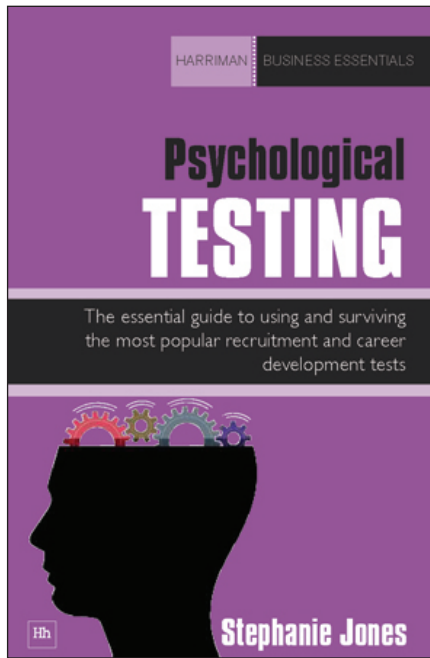
It might also be argued that national cultures should be considered in understanding psychology. This is a large and important topic, addressed to a certain extent by the developing of different language editions of tests and of norm groups of test-takers among specific nationalities. For example, although frequency of extraversion and introversion in national populations does not vary, the expression of this characteristic can be very different. The

extraverts in the USA are more extreme than in Japan or China; by contrast, the introverts in Japan or China are more extreme in the way they express themselves than introverts in the USA. Different nationalities have differing values. For example, some would consider conflict as positive and productive, others see conflict as negative and in terms of their values would seek harmony at any cost. While some nationalities support values involving risk-taking, others are risk-averse. Much of the study of psychology is based on an assumption of a degree of individualism among test-takers. Personalities are constant across cultures, but some societies are community-oriented in their values, do not encourage individualism, and exhibit pressure to conform. Clearly, this is a subject for wider investigation, outside of the scope of the present book.

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