The tough global economy has taken its toll on businesses everywhere. And while everyone hopes a rebound is on the horizon, today’s organizations must continue dealing in the here and now—doing their best to manage their budgets and investing in their biggest assets—their people.

One strategy that’s growing in popularity is the use of personality assessments—both for front-end candidate selection and for ongoing leadership development within an existing workforce.

When times are tough, making the right hiring and development decisions can be critical to strategic growth (and avoiding costly hiring mistakes). Fortunately, the right personality assessment can help your organization address three key challenges.

Solve Three Key Problems with Personality Assessments—and Make Your Testing Program Work for You

With baby boomers retiring and a shrinking population of ready leaders, organizations need results—fast. Discover how employee testing and personality assessments can bridge the gap between today’s resources and tomorrow’s success.

Predicting Performance

BY JULIE BOS
Challenge #1: Selecting the Right Candidates

It sounds simple, but it’s true. At the very least, personality assessments can evaluate the basic employability of an applicant (e.g., Will the person show up for work? Can the person provide competent customer service?). Secondly, it also provides insight about whether a candidate’s personality fits the job itself. For example, extroverts are ideal for sales positions, while introverts are better suited as long-distance truck drivers. This knowledge can go a long way toward pinpointing the right individual for a job.

“With the high unemployment rate, a lot of people out there are searching for work—and they’re applying for a very small number of jobs,” said Adam Vassar, Senior Consultant for Hogan Assessments. “Using personality assessments for pre-employment screening really gives organizations a low-cost, low-touch, and highly predictive strategy for identifying those high-potential individuals from a very large candidate pool.”

Challenge #2: Developing the Right Leaders

When applied to your existing workforce, personality testing can provide a solid basis for coaching around career and leadership development—using talent that is already on your payroll.

“When economic times are tough, organizations look to their leaders to find strategies to help capitalize on the ever-changing business environment,” said Vassar. “Assessments help organizations gain insight to enhance a leader’s strategic self-awareness—the understanding of his or her own strengths, weaknesses and behaviors, and how they can use those strengths as a foundation for future opportunities. The assessment results become like a conversation-starter about the coaching and behavioral changes that may help the employee grow in his or her career.”

Challenge #3: Addressing the Generational Gap

Today’s organizations know that in coming years, as a larger portion of their workforce retires, there will be fewer individuals to call upon for those leadership positions—and the war for talent will grow. The immediate goal becomes clear: Smart companies need to accelerate that leadership development and invest in the tools that can optimize the process.

“When there are fewer people to turn to, your current leaders become that much more important,” said Vassar. “Assessments that help employees understand their strengths and weaknesses can accelerate the development of leaders. This is particularly helpful for the next generation that has less of a leadership track record. Assessments that help project the likely future performance of these employees can also help organizations understand how those employees may perform in future assignments. This information can be extremely valuable.”

Make Your Assessments Work for You

Six Best Practices for Success

Once you decide that personality assessments should become a part of your HR continuum, it’s important to forge a partnership with the right provider—and that you begin using the right tools. Here are some helpful hints to guide your way.

1. Fully understand the problem you’re trying to solve.

“I’ve seen many organizations approach testing with a ‘ready-fire-aim’ approach instead of the other way around,” said Vassar. “They jump into testing without first calling a time-out to fully understand the problem they’re trying to solve. Whether the goal is to reduce turnover, increase productivity or prepare employees for leadership, knowing the goal is essential. Only then can you choose the proper tool and configure it correctly.”

2. Choose your partner carefully.

Before selecting an assessment partner, it’s always wise to do your homework. When evaluating a prospective provider, focus on the company’s past research, past success rates (have their assessments worked?), alignment with professional psychological standards and legal defensibility with results. [See sidebar, next page, for more evaluation questions.]

3. Make sure the partner (and specific assessment tools) can support globalization.

If you’re a multi-national organiza-
Evaluating Assessment Providers—Your Guide to Success

Ready to bolster your talent management processes with personality assessments? Make sure you start by choosing a quality provider—and quality testing tools. Here are a few sample questions to help ensure you won’t be disappointed.

1. Is the provider a member of the American Psychological Association (APA), Society of Industrial/Organizational Psychology (SIOP) or other professional organization that mandates ethical and statistical guidelines for creating assessments?

2. What standardization validation process is followed before the personality assessment provider implements a selection test in an organization?

3. Can the provider produce a summary of validation results for jobs similar to the one under consideration?

4. Has the provider been involved in any legal challenges of a test, and if so, what was the outcome?

To read an entire 12-question checklist (courtesy of Hogan Assessments), go to http://www.hoganassessments.com/sites/default/files/12_Quest_Dom.pdf
YOUR JOB JUST GOT EASIER...

A NEW Workforce.com!

TAKE A TOUR OF THE NEW WORKFORCE.COM

IN-DEPTH CONTENT
90 years of HR experience and award-winning content
Specialized content channels including recruiting, talent management, comp and benefits, technology, workplace culture, and more!

MULTIMEDIA PLATFORM
Live chats, blogs, webcasts and events, white papers, audio and video, case studies...and more!

POWERFUL SEARCH
The industry’s richest database covering today’s most important issues

Stay Connected to the Largest HR Audience
follow the conversation

www.workforce.com