



# Assessment 101

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## Assessment 101

Assessment tests, when used as part of the hiring process, provide employers an effective way of helping to decide which candidates are the most qualified for a specific job. Though assessment tests have been used since the early 1900s, in recent years they have been proliferating across many different companies in many different industries. As top talent becomes more of a necessity to secure, assessments become a critical tool for hiring managers and recruiters to utilize.

### What is an Assessment?

Any method used in a hiring process that provides data or information about a candidate's qualifications and potential that will be used in a selection decision is considered an assessment.

Assessments in general are predictive tools used to support informed decision making. Assessment tests, such as personality instruments or intelligence tests, provide predictive information on a candidate's job performance. The following all qualify as assessments:

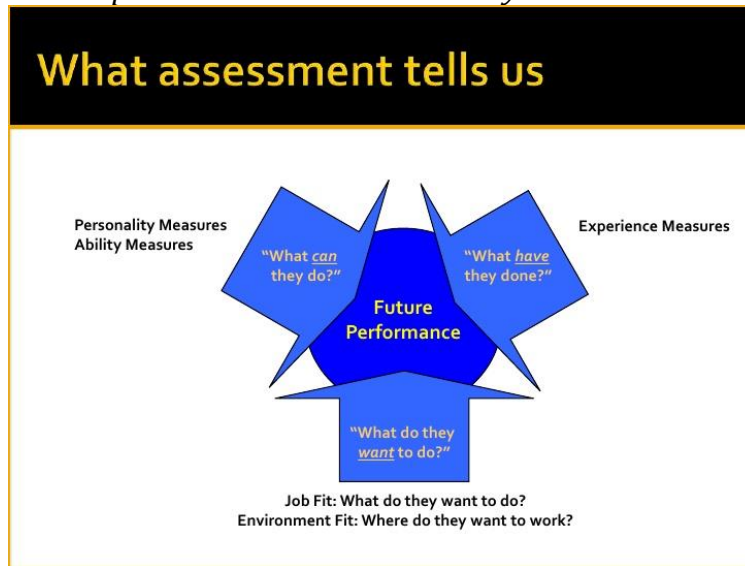
- ✓ Resumes
- ✓ Background Checks
- ✓ Biographical History Tests
- ✓ Integrity Tests
- ✓ Simulations
- ✓ Personality Assessments
- ✓ Cognitive Ability Tests
- ✓ Situational Judgment Tests
- ✓ Drug Screens
- ✓ Reference Checks
- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Work Sample Tests
- ✓ Assessment Centers

## Why Use an Assessment?

Assessments help provide objective, job-relevant information about a candidate to a decision maker in a hiring process. This information can relate to organizational fit, person-job fit, the ability to perform the job successfully, etc. While these factors have long been lauded to be picked up by a manager's gut feeling about a candidate in an interview, research and organizational statistics show otherwise.

Figure 1

*Sample Assessments and what they Communicate*



*RocketHire Assessment 101 4 Steps to Success (PowerPoint Slides).*

Hiring managers and recruiters, being undoubtedly human, are prone to the same errors and biases that other people commit and this is often expressed in the hiring process. For example, one of the most common biases that interviewers make is the *similar-to-me* bias. The *similar-to-me bias* unconsciously impacts our decision making and judgment by focusing on criteria of a candidate that is similar to the interviewer.

When the interviewer and the candidate share similarities, the interviewer is positively biased towards that candidate, often ignoring whether the similarities have anything to do with job performance at all

Due to errors like above, assessments have become extremely important tools to help provide objective information about a candidate. Specifically, they help to:

- ✓ Structure and provide consistency across the hiring process
- ✓ Deliver job-relevance and minimize the effect of biases
- ✓ Provide a way to support quality of hire
- ✓ Identify developmental needs before the candidate gets on the job
- ✓ Separate out higher potential candidates from lower potential candidates
- ✓ Focus your time on the candidates who are going to have the largest positive impact on your company
- ✓ Hire smarter!

## What an Assessment CANNOT do

Assessments are powerful tools to help select talent, but they are often misperceived by hiring managers and recruiters. For example, assessments are sometimes perceived as “silver bullets” that will tell you everything you need to know about a candidate. There is no one assessment that can accomplish this. Assessments do not replace decision-making, rather they support decision-making.



Assessments are not meant to validate a hiring manager’s perception on a candidate. In fact, if an assessment is used in this manner, the assessment may often be perceived as ineffective. This is because the subjective nature of a hiring manager’s opinion may be at odds with what the assessment is communicating. This is not to say that the subjective opinion of a hiring manager is not important, but that opinion should be developed based upon objective data on a candidate. In the end, assessments should be used as inputs to help develop a hiring manager’s judgment.



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