# synermetric

Talent Management: Our Expert Views

**“You are responsible for the talent that has been entrusted to you”**

**Henri-Frédéric Amiel**

## Contents

# From the CEO

Talent Management is a hot topic and never far from the top of the agenda. It seems that next year will be no different with Talent Management being predicted as one of the major focuses for business.

In this eBook we bring together nine talented and experienced individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, all with a common interest and expertise in Talent Management. At Synermetric we are proud of our network of product authors, associates and the partnerships we have built. This eBook showcases our joint wealth of knowledge. This year we have expanded our network further, forming new partnerships with product authors-- some of which you will find in this eBook-- as well as organisations such as the Organisational Development Network (ODN), ever strengthening our offerings and relationships.

We hope you enjoy the articles here and offer a few suggestions on how to make the most of the content.

## We encourage you to:

- Start with the article that sparks your interest the most –
  No need to begin on the first page
- Share it with friends, colleagues, strangers –
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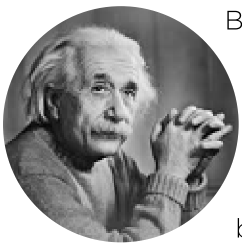
John Dutton
CEO and Chairman, Synermetric Limited

# Made-to-Measure Talent

Ian Florance

How you manage talent depends on what talent is – or rather, what it means to you.

Since 1989, when the term was first used by Softscope, a lot of time, brainpower, and money has been spent on defining talent: it now means something like the motivation, management, prediction, and focus of special talents. It is often used to indicate setting up a pipeline of young talented people who will become future organisational leaders.



But increasingly, a one-size-fits-all dictionary definition is irrelevant. Like leadership, talent is no longer off-the-peg; it's made-to-measure. Talent (and leadership) in an arts organisation will be very different than that required in an investment bank. A service company needs very different people than a manufacturing outfit. All talent doesn't tend towards being Einstein-like, just as all leaders shouldn't aspire to being Nelson Mandela or General Patton.

Talent comprises human characteristics that are particularly important to reaching your organisation's objectives. These might be particular abilities, special knowledge, or qualifications; but they equally might be a very strong sense of ethics, the ability to stand out in a crowd, or a relentless attention to detail. This latter human characteristic is not often included in definitions of talent but I suspect it's pretty darn important in a nuclear power station.

Time frame is important in thinking about the issue. Do you need your talent now or ten years in the future? Can you grow it or must you find it fully grown?

Finally, talent is difficult to acquire. A simple non-structured interview will do for some roles. When acquiring talent we use tests, competency frameworks, assessment centres, and simulations. It's hard to find out whether someone can fly a 747 without putting them in the cockpit of one. You only know about someone's sense of ethics when you put them in an ethically ambiguous situation.

If this is even close to the truth, managing talent is not a simple recipe: follow it and have the perfect baked talent Alaska. Finding and looking after sales champions is very different from managing PhD geneticists or entrepreneurial wealth makers.

But there are some actions you can take, as well as some questions you can answer, that may help you set up your own made-to-measure strategy. But first, a simple warning!

**Don't Talk About Talent Too Much!**

This sounds odd but think about it: if you keep calling certain members of staff 'talent' then others will make the obvious deduction that they're less important. The result is a demotivated work force.

**Link Talent to Strategy**

What you're trying to achieve, by when, defines the talent you need. As a consequence of this...

**Don't Clone**

Just because a certain range of talents has delivered success in the past doesn't mean it will in future. Don't just replace staff like-with-like. Plan for changing times.

**Think Creatively**

There are plenty of people who will tell you that talent relates to particular knowledge or the potential to lead or the achievement of certain academic qualifications. But, as I've suggested, the talent you need to get where you want might involve personal presence, ethics, motivation or superb energy. This creates a question:

**What Does Special Mean to You?**

Talent, if we look for it, is definitely about special characteristics. In knowledge it might be obvious what 'special' means ('This person has a PhD in futurology from MIT'). In other areas it might be less easy to define. After this...

### Create a Talent Shopping List

List the key talents you'll need this year, next year, the year after – go as far as you want. A competence framework or person/role analysis tool can help here. Or sit round a table with others and thrash it out.

### Get Your Recruitment Right

Feed your talent shopping list into how you recruit. It will define what sort of techniques you use – ability tests, in-tray exercises, personality measures, assessment centres, structured interviews, work simulations. Firms in Europe are using social events to evaluate candidates for whom social and emotional intelligence is critical.

### Don't Just Look to Recruitment

Sometimes there simply aren't enough qualified candidates outside the company or you can't afford the time and money to find them. There are other sources of talent:

- Inside the company - 360s, tests and supervisor ratings identify people with potential for new jobs and bigger roles. People tend to be narrowed down by jobs and may have skills and knowledge no one notices until you look for them. Your own workforce will almost certainly be part of your talent pool.

- Competitors - being realistic, one of the best ways of finding talent very specific to a sector is in competing companies. But beware! This can lead to backlash.

- Suppliers - sometimes you can't afford or don't want to recruit a particular talent. A supplier or independent consultant can supply it more flexibly. Manage them carefully. It's worth noting that recent research shows that 40% of spending goes outside the average company to external people and organisations. If you're not treating these resources as potential talents (and evaluating the dangers of not having them under your direct control), you're not managing or utilising them properly.

### Think About Motivation

Genuinely talented people like to learn; they want to acquire new talents. Take internal and external development seriously.

### Be Insecure!

You don't hire talent to prove you're better than them. Quite simply, they should be better than you at certain things so let them get on with it. Intervene only if they need help, guidance, a sounding board, or they're getting into serious trouble. You'll feel insecure but, to quote '60s guru Alan Watts, there is a wisdom in insecurity.

## About the Author

Ian Florance took degrees in English and Art History at Reading and Leeds, then worked in academic, educational, and trade publishing before specialising in publishing applied psychology instruments. He's now an expert in applied business psychology. He writes for The Psychologist, the monthly professional magazine for psychologists. He is owner of the OnlyConnect business consultancy and OnlyConnect Publishing, which publishes his novels and poetry. He was visiting tutor to graphic design students and also taught writing at Central St Martins College of Art and Design.

# Getting to Know You

## The Use of Personality Profiling in Training Needs Analysis

Dr George Sik

The challenge of diagnosing learning and training needs has never been greater, especially as those needs can be very specific and subtle. Increasingly, psychometric personality profiling is playing a major part not only in the diagnosis of these needs but in helping to recommend detailed personal development plans for individuals.

"There is something about the rather impersonal nature of a questionnaire that encourages honest disclosure"

Many would more readily associate personality profiling with selection and answering the question of whether the way you prefer to behave is suited for a particular job, but increasingly the diagnostic benefits of such questionnaires are being turned to identifying training needs on an individual or even a team basis. After all, who knows you better than you know yourself? The detailed questions such an instrument can pack into a concentrated and relatively short period of time can be an excellent starting point in such an exercise. After all, there is something about the rather impersonal nature of a questionnaire that encourages honest disclosure – much as it is frequently reported by doctors that patients are much more honest about how much they drink and smoke and how little exercise they get when they fill in a questionnaire than when they are face-to-face with their GP.

But how do such questionnaires work? Well, whatever the format – and some force you to make choices and to prioritise in order to tease out the really important aspects of your personality – the chances are that they will start by finding out which straightforward aspects of preferred behaviour apply most to you. To what extent do you like working alongside others? How far do you think ahead? Are you more likely to make decisions quickly or cautiously? This is itself very revealing but in many cases forms only the starting point for a more sophisticated insight into your training needs.

After all, while personality may underpin the things you do well – and those where you may struggle – it is really specific competencies (strengths, capabilities, performance indicators, call them what you will) that you are likely to want to develop further. Each of these is likely to be made up of various combinations of preferred behaviours. Leadership, for example, may combine an interest in taking charge, assertiveness, ease in social situations, empowerment of others, a tendency to bounce back from setbacks, and so on. Each competency area will be made up of different aspects of personality weighted appropriately. It is possible to be very scientific about this. In our own questionnaire, The Quest Profiler, we looked closely at the links between managers' ratings and people's own perceptions to decide which combinations of personality areas should predict performance in which competency areas.

> "While personality may underpin the things you do well - and those where you may struggle - it is really specific competencies that you are likely to want to develop further"

It might be all very well to diagnose that an individual is not a strong performer in several specific areas, but what next? Often questionnaires have stopped at this 'diagnosis' stage. Increasingly, however, psychologists have tried to go further and make realistic recommendations for next steps – building towards a personal development plan. If someone is falling down in an area like 'Persuading Others', 'Flexibility' or 'Strategic Awareness', it is possible to suggest training courses (such as those offered through the Institute of Leadership and Management, for example), personal coaching initiatives, books to read, and personal behaviours to try and modify. It is never easy and the individual has to want to change, but it points to the way forward and, after all, if someone completed the questionnaire honestly, they are likely to be realistic about their diagnosed development needs.

An individual could, for example, complete such a questionnaire and reveal that they are shy in company, quiet by nature, rather guarded when it comes to expressing themselves and more insular than gregarious. This in turn is likely to reveal that networking might be a problem for them. The output from the questionnaire can then suggest some one-to-one coaching in this area, perhaps accompanied by some more formal coaching. It can suggest key behaviours to try and modify and give some recommendations on how to do so and reveal some reading matter that might help with both ideas and practical tips in this area.

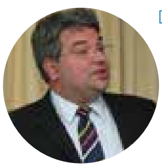
It is possible to be more elaborate still. With the latest incarnation of The Quest Profiler we have tried to provide insights in deeper areas like emotional intelligence, whether someone is more likely to be a transformational leader or a transactional manager (or some combination of the two) and how they are likely to behave in situations of conflict. In an increasingly turbulent and economically uncertain world, conflict behaviour is of increasing interest. Is an individual more likely to be competitive or avoid robust situations? Might they cooperate, comply, or be prone to conciliation? Needless to say, their own behaviour will only be one factor in understanding conflicts and resolving them: what of the behaviour of the other parties involved?

It is here that we move from diagnosing the training needs of individuals to those of groups. By looking at the collection of individuals that make up a particular team, we can make broader predictions. Does the team lack anyone who is prepared to criticise? Does it need someone to placate the easily angered? Are there too many individuals who want to be 'top dog'? It is often only when a team takes a close look at itself in this way that it can begin to appreciate where it has not been performing successfully – perhaps for quite a time.

"By looking at the collection of individuals that make up a particular team, we can make broader predictions"

Analysing training needs is not easy and acting on that analysis harder still, but the psychometric approach, if harnessed effectively, has always adapted to the needs of the workplace. In a harsh economic climate, where selection is increasingly less of a priority and development of individuals and organisational restructuring increasingly the norm, it is likely that this technique will be increasingly prominent in the organisations where we work today.

## About the Author



Dr George Sik is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist and associate fellow of eras ltd where he has worked for over 10 years. He is responsible for the design and delivery of psychometric training courses. He is an advisor on psychometric best practice to businesses throughout the UK and designs and delivers assessment and development projects.

Prior to his role at eras ltd, George worked with SHL (UK). While at SHL he was instrumental in the development, marketing, validation, and application of tests and questionnaires (especially the OPQ suite). He trained more people to use psychometrics than anyone in the company's history and managed the trainee consultant programme. George has published widely in academic journals, HR magazines, specialist publications, and national and regional press. He has authored a number of books and made extensive television appearances on programmes such as Hard News, Channel Four News, ITN News, BBC Breakfast, GMTV and Sky News.

# Hiring Right

## Jettison your ideas about Mr. and Ms. Right.

Dr Kenneth R. Brousseau

Everyone knows that making the right hiring decision is tough. No news there. Also, everyone knows that the higher the level of the executive position, the more costly, disruptive, or downright destructive a wrong decision can be. Yet, poor decisions go on being made year after year, decade after decade. We hear and read about them all of the time. A Fortune 100 company sweeps the globe looking for a new CEO. Finally, Mr. or Ms. Right with a great pedigree and very impressive track record is identified and hired. But, whoops! Nine or ten months later, Mr./Ms. Right has gone on to "pursue other interests," says the press release. Apparently, Mr./Ms. Right was really Mr./Ms. Wrong!

What gives here? Why do we put up with this kind of wreckage and disruption? I've asked this question many times. The most common answer is, "Well, I don't know. I guess that's just how it is. Making right hiring decisions is tough!"

Really? Is it all that tough, or have we just become accustomed to the pain? After all, that seems to be the way it has always been – little more than a crapshoot. We've learned to live with it. A Fact of Life.

I'm here to say it does not have to be this way. Good hiring decisions are quite possible. Actually, they are quite easy!

How can that be? First, let's deep six the Mr./Ms. Right concept. Except in some wildly exceptional circumstances, there is no absolute right or absolute wrong.

**What you need to think about is fit.**

What you want is the candidate who fits the position or, at the very least, the culture. Let me explain. Several years ago, I and several colleagues published in the Harvard Business Review a study of management and executive success based upon just over 120,000 managers and executives whom we had profiled using our StyleView assessment. When profiled, these people were employed in positions ranging from first level supervisors all the way up to the C-suite. We wanted to see how – and to what extent – the profiles of managers and executives located at different points on the executive ladder differed. Were there discernible patterns and differences? We were pretty sure there were, but little did we know what sharply etched patterns of change we were about to see.

Our StyleView assessment tool is designed to pick up on styles of decision-making. We focus on decision-making for the simple fact that this is what anyone in management does – all day long, every day. Big decisions and little decisions are a seamless part of life as a manager or executive. Yet, a crucial fact about this gets little attention: different people go about this business of decision-making in different ways – often, in markedly different ways.

This, perhaps, is another one of those simple facts of life that we take so much for granted that we give it little notice. Yet the implications are big, especially when combined with another simple fact – different kinds of decisions require different kinds of decision-making.

Our research shows clearly that there is not a Mr. or Ms. Right, nor is there a Mr. or Ms. Wrong, in any absolute sense at all. We need to take into account the context and the specific position in order to determine the profile of the best candidate when we go hunting for a new executive.

Back to the Harvard Business Review study. What we found is that the decision-making styles of managers and executives did indeed differ at different points on the executive ladder, as Figure 1 shows.

Figure 1 –Decision-Making Styles on the Executive Ladder


The graphs on the left show the interpersonal face of the executives' styles. This is how individuals tend to present themselves in public or in formal situations. The graphs on the right show how the executives think and decide in less public circumstances, when just going about things naturally without thinking about how they are thinking.

Figure 3, on the page below, describes the specific styles. The left and right patterns differ. Hence, we see that executives may think differently when conscious of being in the public eye than when they are alone or with close colleagues working to reach a decision. Both pictures show distinct patterns of change as we look at the average scores of managers at junior levels (the left side of each graph) vs. the average scores of executives at the higher executive levels (the right side of each graph). Remember, there were over 120,000 managers and executives portrayed here. Numbers this big cannot deceive! Actually, however, the graphs show a subset of the 120,000 – the 20 percent most highly compensated individuals at each level, on the top, and the 20 percent lowest compensated on the bottom two graphs. So, in this case, we are only looking at about 24,000 individuals.

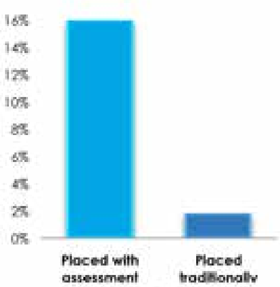
The patterns seen here illustrate that different decision-making styles work better than others at different points on the ladder.

Different positions require different decision style profiles for maximum success.

What works well in one position may not work as well in a different position. The best style? No such thing! If there's a best here, it is the capability of adjusting one's style as per the immediate situation one faces; however that is easier said than done. We're talking about habits here and some habits are deeply ingrained.

As it turns out, this sort of information has an important place in making hiring decisions. We have found that benchmark profiles can be developed and used as targets for specific positions against which candidates can be screened. In this regard, there is no notion of finding that magical candidate who is good in every possible way. Instead, the focus is on finding one or more candidates whose particular profiles – in this instance, decision style profiles – show a good fit with the target position. We find that using a good benchmark – not just some pie in the sky idea about Mr./Ms. Right – makes a big difference in arriving at hiring decisions that actually work out well.

*Figure 2*
*Promotion Rates in 2 years following hiring*




Adapted from D. Landis, K. Brousseau, & P. Johnson, "Pre-hiring assessment improves the executive talent pipeline." Korn/Ferry Institute. February, 2011.

Recently, a group of colleagues and I looked at outcomes of several hundred hiring decisions made by recruiters who had hired senior executives a couple of years previously. Over three quarters of these executives were still employed by the firms that had hired them. An outside researcher was engaged to follow-up on each of the executives. About two-thirds of those executives had been placed with the assistance of an assessment screening using our StyleView assessment and benchmark profiles derived from our analysis of the most successful executives in the HBR study. The other third had been screened using only "traditional" recruitment methods – interviews and reference checks.

A key issue we asked our researcher to investigate was whether each executive was still in the same position with the same responsibilities as the one into which the executive had been placed, or whether the executive subsequently had been promoted and given greater responsibility. Figure 2 shows the results. As you can see, 16% of those placed with the assistance of the assessment screening had been promoted during the following two years, whereas slightly less than 2% of those placed using traditional screening methods had been promoted. The difference is statistically quite significant.

Those executives placed using the assessment screening experienced between 8 and 9 times greater chances of being promoted compared to the traditionally placed executives.

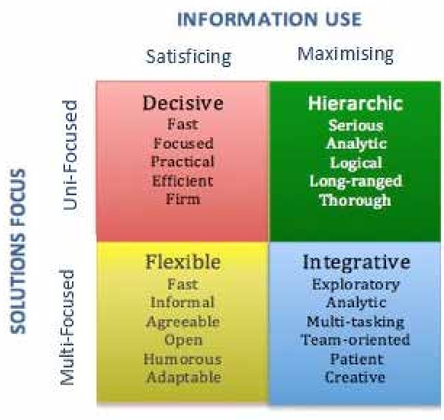
The lesson here is quite clear – the right hiring decision has a much greater chance of being made when there is a clear behavioural picture of the desirable candidate – what we call a benchmark - used as a method for determining fit along with good, scientifically based assessment tools. In this instance, we found that the very best of the assessed executives in our study fit both on their public decision-making styles and on their day-to-day operating decision styles. The operating style is unique to the StyleView model.

Clearly, a bit of scientific research can pay off handsomely in making hiring decisions that work. When we assist clients in filling executive positions, we start by pulling up a benchmark profile based on research like the HBR study we've described.

Then, working with the client, we "tweak" the profile by taking into account the enterprise's strategic objectives and any special qualities of the particular position in question in order to arrive at a benchmark tailored to determine the unique behaviour picture of the ideal candidate. The picture this benchmark paints is not a "walk on water" picture, but instead describes a particular position in a particular enterprise. Along the way, we jettison any stereotyped ideas that our clients or ourselves may have about Mr./Ms. Absolute Right Executive. The payoff is a lot less wreckage and disruption and a lot more success!

## The StyleView Model

*Figure 3: Styles of Decision-Making*




The StyleView model focuses on four basic styles of decision-making. The styles differ in two dimensions: information use (the horizontal dimension in the 2x2 table) and solution focus (the vertical dimension).

Everyone uses each of the styles at different points in time. But, whereas one person might work in the Decisive style mode 65% of the time, another person might work in the Integrative style mode 65% of the time. Hence, there are wide variations in individual style profiles. The StyleView assessment produces two profiles of a person's decision-making styles that look at the person's style use from different perspectives.

Public style – or Interpersonal Role Style – represents, in decision style terms, the way the person presents her/himself in circumstances where the person is aware of being in the "public eye" – e.g., when making presentations, when interviewing for a position, or when attending a formal meeting. At these times, the person is likely to feel the need to present an appropriate image according to that person's own beliefs and values.

The second profile portrays the person's use of styles when working alone or with close colleagues in circumstances where the person is thinking his or her way through a decision without thinking about other people. In other words, the person is just going about things in whatever way comes naturally, without giving any attention to how he or she is thinking or working. Most people differ in their role styles versus their operating styles. This is why first impressions often differ from one's perception of a person after dealing with that person closely over a period of time. The StyleView model is unique in capturing both role styles and operating styles. We find determining both levels of behaviour is important in making good hiring decisions.

## About the Author

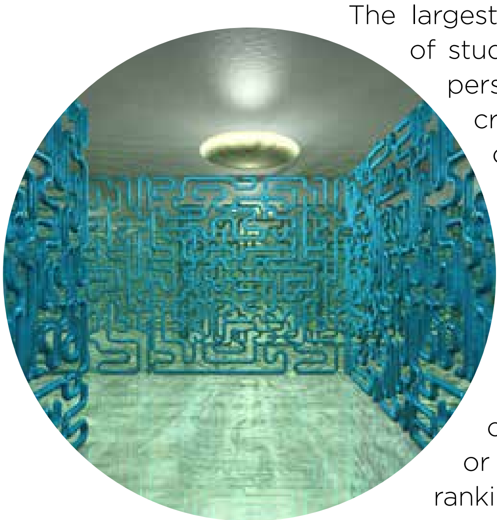
Kenneth R. Brousseau is Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of Decision Dynamics LLC, a firm specialising in behavioural assessment systems and executive talent management. Dr Brousseau received his Ph.D. in organisational behaviour from Yale University. Prior to forming Decision Dynamics, he was on the faculty of the Management and Organisation department at the Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California.

He is the author of numerous articles on career development, work system design, team development, and organisational design which have appeared in many well-known journals. He is the co-author of The Dynamic Decision Maker.

# Big Data for Predicting Job Performance

Dr Tom Janz

It's hard to crack open a business magazine or click on a human resource blog these days without coming across the phrase 'Big Data' in the headline. Most definitions of 'Big Data' centre around words that begin with the letter 'V' – volume, velocity, and variety. Volume means 'big', not surprisingly. Where Megabyte used to mean 'big' and now Gigabyte means 'big', big data is measured in terabytes, petabytes, and zettabytes (a trillion gigabytes). Yet when it comes to predicting job performance, we seldom have had more than a few megabytes of data.



The largest meta-analyses that combine the data from hundreds of studies that include data on the performer's mental ability, personality, bio-data, training courses, work experience, and credit history, in order to predict important performance outcomes such as supervisory performance ratings, attendance data, customer satisfaction scores, production and wastage data would still have a hard time exceeding a single gigabyte. Adding social media and video streams certainly boosts the volume and also the variety and velocity of the data.

Variety means different types of data – some data coming from numerical scores on tests, training courses or supervisory performance ratings. Other types include rankings – as in sales success rankings. Other types also includea free text answers, from simple word associations to

complex sentences, paragraphs and whole books. Or the data could be still images, audio streams or video streams. Streaming data types involve velocity, meaning they change rapidly.


Regardless of the volume, variety, and velocity of the data, it has to fall into two other important categories.

**Predictor data** captures qualities of the performer that tell us who will be highly valuable versus less valuable in the future.

**Criterion data** tells us who the more and less valuable people are, based on their job performance.

Predicting who will generate the most value before they spend 3-18 months on the job is the whole point of candidate selection programmes.

## When Big Data Makes Little Sense

### Confusing Matched Data as Big Data

In order to know which predictors work, we need to have people for whom we have both predictor and criterion data (matched cases). And that's often a big problem. Some people confuse Big Data with Matched Data. Merely having zillions of test scores or credit histories or bio-data scores or social media interactions will do nothing to discover how those scores can be combined to predict which candidates will do well on the job. Yet many retail companies collect millions of predictor records and don't match them up with performance data. They take the value of their assessment process on faith. Alternatively, many professional sports organisations collect endless statistics on their player and team performance, year after year. Yet few measure the mental abilities, bio-data histories, and personality characteristics of their athletes. Without matched cases, the data can't be analysed by powerful statistical methods that quantify how well a given set of measures predicts future job performance.

### Measuring Finicky Conditions

Big data also makes little sense when either the predictor or criterion measures aren't reliable – that is, a person who scores high on one occasion scores low on the next occasion with no systematic change to explain the difference. Asking people to record their mood on a scale of one to ten each day and then matching that to their daily sales numbers in an inbound call centre would most likely result in a low predictor-criterion relationship. While a few people are consistently in a bad mood and a few others consistently in a good mood, most people's mood varies with the day, making mood on any one day a poor predictor of performance.

### Tons of History and No Indicators for Performance

Finally, big data makes little sense when there is no clear, efficient way to score the data that relates to future job performance. Owners of large resume databases face this problem, combined with the problem of having little criterion data against which to confirm the value of the resume scores they do concoct. Total number of resume characters, number of sentences, characters per sentence, words per sentence, characters per word – all these scores can be computed quickly and cheaply, but don't likely relate to job performance. Boolean character searches can return resumes that contain exact matches to key search terms the greatest number of times. Recently, more sophisticated search algorithms contain proxy words for the primary search terms, so that candidates using terms that mean similar things will be included in the returned set of resumes. Still, none of these purely algorithmic solutions deliver candidate slates whose performance rises substantially above average.

## When Big Data Brings Big Benefits

### Complex Issues Requiring Multi-Level Measurements

Big data makes the most sense when the work itself is complex, requiring

- people with both mental and interpersonal skills and
- people who perform well in very specific environmental conditions

Subtle factors can be teased out of the interactions, such as

- motivational
- cultural
- environmental
- personal

Big data takes many matched data cases to produce stable prediction equations that involve non-linear terms to capture these subtle interactions.

### Measuring Present Behaviour for Future Performance

Big data is not needed if a mental ability test and a measure of social potency capture most of the predictive variance for a routine job. In one example, more than 7000 store clerks for a national chain of cosmetic stores were administered items from a test that had been validated many times in retail settings. The linear scale scores based on the items correlated poorly with a criterion based on a recorded termination code.

Reasons for termination included:

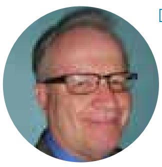
- return to school
- accepted a job elsewhere
- spousal relocation
- terminated for theft
- terminated for poor performance
- voluntary quit

Given the large dataset, it was possible to analyse each item against the proportion of positive vs. negative termination codes, and develop a new scale that correlated negatively with the old scales, but positively with the new predictor scale. And keep in mind that 7000 cases is still small data to those who define big data in terms of terabytes and petabytes. We will need Big Statistics to get to work on the Big Data that is being collected by LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook, and other social media. Companies like Burning Glass and Content Analyst have developed statistical methods for matching essay type answers marked as exemplars from top performers and poor performers in order to identify the performance level of answers from candidates responding to the same questions. While useful for scoring SAT essays, this technology could also reliably score digitised answers to behavioural interview questions collected from candidates online via audio or video recorded interviews.

### Summing Up

The Big Benefits of Big Data require that we have both Big Predictor and Big Criterion data on matched cases. We will need more work on Big Statistics for scoring the variety of high velocity data types (sensor, audio, and video streams) already captured, and on the way.

## About the Author



Dr Janz is Chief Scientist for PeopleAssessments.com. He has a psychology degree and Ph.D. in Industrial Psychology. Dr Janz began his career with academic positions at a number of universities. He has published several articles and book chapters on topics ranging from expectancy theory to motivational culture to selection utility. In 1986 he co-authored a book on the selection interview titled "Behaviour Description Interviewing: New, Accurate, Cost Effective."

In 1992 Dr. Janz left academia and took a position as Director of Behaviour Description Systems with Personnel Decisions International (PDI). When PDI sold its selection business to ePredix in 2000, he accepted a position as Director of Assessment for Guru Worldwide Inc. When Guru was being considered for sale to Unicru in 2001, he briefly joined Unicru as a Chief Scientist. As Unicru completed the purchase of Guru, he ultimately took on the role of Chief Scientist for Behaviour Description Technologies to pursue a long-held belief in the value of online interview decision support technology. Since then, he has taken roles as Chief Scientist for Batrus Hollweg International, and Senior Product Manager for Lominger International. He has returned to full time pursuit of his dream of offering valid, affordable online tests and interviews—now implemented via PeopleAssessments.com.

# Leveraging Multi-Rater Feedback for Successful Behavioural Change

Kenneth M. Nowack, Ph.D.

Increasingly, 360-degree feedback systems have proliferated and are being used for diverse purposes and interventions (e.g., executive coaching, performance evaluation, talent management, and succession planning). Despite the widespread use of 360-degree feedback, coaches and consultants still seem to ignore some of the potential issues and evidence-based research highlighting the possible limitations, risks, and issues of this type of intervention for coaching and talent development[30]. Under the right circumstances, feedback interventions can facilitate some of the conditions required for successful behavioural change[18], yet there are many studies showing that such processes sometimes create no measurable change whatsoever[26], small effects[31], or may have negative effects on both engagement and productivity[11].

Despite the limitations of multi-rater feedback, coaches and consultants can leverage this type of intervention to maximise both awareness and behavioural change by understanding and using comprehensive feedback and individual change models which build on the theoretical work of others[7, 10, 14, 19]. This article attempts to provide an integrated and theoretically derived individual change framework for coaches to extend more traditional uses of multi-rater feedback interventions beyond just insight and awareness to facilitate successful short and long-term behavioural change despite realistic barriers and challenges.

## A New Integrated Individual Behavioural Change Model for Coaching

One important fundamental goal of multi-rater feedback, particularly within coaching interventions, is actual change of behaviour on the job. This has not been highlighted enough by coaches and consultants[10, 14]. Initiating of new behaviours and sustaining them over time is particularly challenging for most individuals. The likelihood that an employee will or will not engage in a particular behaviour is influenced heavily by their predictions of the effects and consequences of that behaviour in relation to their own professional goals and objectives. Behavioural change efforts are often not linear, but tend to be progressive, regressive, or even static. It seems intuitive that focus on a single behavioural change is easier to initiate and sustain, but surprisingly, multiple simultaneous efforts (e.g., behaviours planned to improve multiple competencies at the same time) tend to be equal or even more effective because they reinforce quick benefits[9].

One important fundamental goal of multi-rater feedback, particularly within coaching interventions, is actual change of behaviour on the job.

Building on the feedback process models of London et al., (2002) and Gregory et al., (2008), a more specific individual behavioural change model is proposed here based heavily on evidence-based research in health psychology and behavioural medicine literature. The Enlighten, Encourage and Enable model is based on the most often applied theories of individual behavioural change including the theory of planned behaviour[1], self-efficacy and social cognitive theory[3] , the health belief model[32], and the transtheoretical model of change[22]. Each of these theories should be useful to all coaches who are attempting to extend the utility of multi-rater feedback beyond awareness to enhanced effectiveness or impact.

A large body of research has explored the importance of readiness to change as described in the transtheoretical model[22]. This readiness to change model has introduced specific stages in which people are thought to move from a state of no motivation to change to one of internalisation of new behaviour as a new habit that is sustained over time. The transtheoretical model (TTM) construes change as a process involving progress through a series of five interdependent stages (precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance) including the possibility of relapse, giving coaches an important approach for facilitating successful behavioural change efforts based on intrapsychic factors such as motivation and core self-evaluations[2].

# Envisia Learning Behaviour Change Model

### Stage 1: Enlighten


The "what's in it for me" (WIFM) is a critical leverage point for coaches to be successful in behavioural change efforts with their coachees using multi-rater feedback interventions. Helping coachees to become more self-aware of their intent to change, identifying signature strengths to leverage or developmental opportunities to work on as well as clarifying potential derailment factors to be managed can be useful to help increase readiness for behavioural change. However, insight and self-awareness is only a fundamental first step that is a necessary, but not sufficient condition, for behavioural change to take place.

Motivational interviewing (MI) is a useful individual-based approach for coaches and consultants to assist coachees to reflect and target specific developmental goals to work on, and a powerful way to enhance self-insight and commitment to change. It is a style that values and emphasises the coachee's self-evaluations, values, interests, and motives, and utilises reflective listening and probing to help the coachee make lasting behavioural changes. MI is a collaborative approach to identifying motivations to change, potential obstacles, targeted goal setting and re-appraisal to ensure long term success without being overly directive with the coachee[21]. The coach must identify the key readiness to change stage from pre-contemplation (no intention to change), contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, and relapse and apply specific approaches, techniques and strategies at each stage to help facilitate successful long-term success[22].

From an MI perspective, coaches would diagnose to carefully understand the coachee-environment system. They would need to listen intently to the coachee's feelings, motives, fears and barriers to behavioural change. As an example, the coach would ask open-ended questions to help the coachee see an association between how one's ability to change specific leadership behaviours could be related to enhanced team performance and engagement of talent reporting to the coachee. The coach would help the coachee reflect on the advantages of committing to behavioural changes and facilitate the elicitation of "change talk" to increase readiness and motivation to try new behaviours on the job based on the multi-rater feedback results.

A technique suggested by Miller and Rollnick (2002) that a coach may utilise to assess a coachee's stage of change is to simply ask them to rate their perceived readiness to change on a scale of 0 – 5, with 5 being that they have already made change, and 0 being not at all interested in changing. To assess confidence to change, a confidence ruler can be employed by the coach: "Why are you an X on the scale and not a zero?" and "What would it take for you to go from X to a higher number?"

During this Enlighten stage, the coach is using the data from the multi-rater feedback process to help the coachee interpret the meaningfulness of rater perspectives compared to their own self-perceptions. One important role of the coach during this stage is to help manage potential coachee reactions to ensure that the feedback does not elicit disengagement or cause the coachee to ignore it or to overly emphasise it in light of multi-rater feedback research previously cited[24]. Reactions from any multi-rater feedback process might range from being pleasantly surprised to experiencing hurt, anger and even depression with predictable consequences to performance, health and psychological well-being[5]. As Joo (2005) has pointed out, the feedback orientation and personality will directly affect the coachee's openness to the coach's input, suggestions and feedback that can affect the overall effectiveness of the intervention.

Recent research suggests that affect is actually more important than cognition in predicting both self-reported intention and behaviour[13]. Their findings suggest an important role of coaches in targeting the emotional reactions and consequences for engaging in new behaviours as well as assessing readiness to change stages. Coaches should assess their own skills, training and experiences and seek additional training and consultation, if necessary, to best help the coachee to understand and interpret their feedback.

One key to successful long-term behavioural change is in the planning process which should also include deliberate practice of newly acquired skills or leveraging of one's strengths.

**Stage 2: Encourage**

One key to successful long-term behavioural change is in the planning process, which should also include deliberate practice of newly acquired skills or leveraging of one's strengths. The coach's role is to ensure the translation of the Enlighten stage to the creation of a realistic, specific and measurable performance development plans in the Encourage stage. Goal setting and developmental planning are generally addressed in most feedback models[7] and, as previously pointed out, coaching appears to significantly help the coachee translate awareness and motivation into specific behavioural change goals[27].

The Encourage stage involves gaining commitment with the coachee towards a collaborative and explicit behavioural change plan. The coach, during this stage, explores signs of resistance and actively strengthens clarity of action plan goals and commitment to implement them. The coachee's motivation to change is a function of the discrepancy between their action plan goal and current situation. Coaches also should help the coachee to see if the goal is realistic, as a large gap between ideal and current states may actually decrease confidence to sustain change over time leading to possible relapse[4, 12].

Following the clarification of the action plan, coachees are encouraged to consider specific methods to successfully achieve their goals, including exploring potential barriers and challenges. This discussion leads the coachee to an explicit summary of why the goal is important, how the goal can be successfully achieved, and what metrics can be developed to track and monitor progress. The coach should secure a verbal commitment from the coachee to strengthen their intention to actually implement the behavioural change goal (e.g., making it public) as well as elicit verbalisations about the feelings underlying the stated intent to change.

**Stage 3: Enable**

This is the stage in which coaches begin to actually help the coachee acquire new knowledge, increase self-efficacy, and reinforce deliberate practice of skills to initiate and maintain important new behaviours. In general, coachees are more likely to try new behaviours in which they are confident in a successful outcome and feel a sense of mastery in maintaining it over time despite some possible setbacks and challenges. If the coachee is lacking confidence in his/her ability to implement the plan, the chances that he or she will maintain it over time will be low. It is the role of the coach to provide encouragement and support with their coachees to explore their feelings about their developmental journey through structured emotional expressive writing or by probing directly for reactions, reflections and insights in each session.

The Enable stage is critical for long-term success of any behaviour modification programme.

This Enable stage is critical for long-term success of any behaviour modification programme and yet this stage is often overlooked or minimised by many coaches. When possible, coaches should be working during this stage to help the coachee manage lapses, recognise successes, enlist the power of social support systems (e.g., help educate the coachee's manager about what they can do to follow up and reinforce key behaviours and learnings), and focus on progress through structured reminders, recognising and rewarding goals, and evaluating overall success.

The coach's role is to assist the coachee with re-evaluating the importance of their goals, and exploring some relapse prevention strategies to prepare the coachee for the inevitable lapses that accompany any behavioural change effort. For example, the coach could help the coachee anticipate future unavoidable high-risk situations and prepare in advance for inevitable lapses with their boss or work team. Encouraging ways for the coachee to reward sustained behaviour is also something the coach can discuss during their follow-up meetings along with an analysis of the coachee's professional and social support network and what role they can play in maintaining new behaviours over time.

Coaches should help develop the self-esteem of their coachees to facilitate self-regulation and to better handle potential failure in light of the inherent challenges to both initiate and sustain behaviour over time[17]. Self-esteem is a complicated construct (it can be stable or unstable) and it can facilitate goal completion, but it can also increase the likelihood of failure by increasing the selection of risky options or unrealistic outcomes (e.g., in coachees with exaggerated self-efficacy). Coaches should attempt to help their coachees build stable self-esteem and explore areas of self-doubt that seem to be at the core of unstable self-esteem, which is commonly conceptualised and defined as fluctuations in reported self-esteem over short periods of time[25].

The strategy of goal reappraisal should also be emphasised during the entire coaching process with a coachee[29]. The coach and coachee should mutually define ways to track, monitor and evaluate progress on the specific goals that are set and sustained over time. Ideally, continuous reminders can be sent to the coachee to highlight progress and successful performance towards his/her development plan and involvement of all relevant stakeholders involved in the coaching intervention (e.g., the coachee's manger, direct reports or internal mentors).

## Leveraging the Impact of Multi-Rater Feedback for Successful Behavioural Change

In our own coaching work we use an online goal setting and evaluation platform called Momentor. This coaching tool allows for a client to review their 360-degree feedback report and select specific competency based goals to begin their development journey[15].

The coach can track and monitor goal progress and Momentor sends out periodic reminder emails to encourage the client to maintain focus and continue working on their professional development plan.

## Goal Setting and Evaluation Platform to Leverage 360-degree Feedback Called Momentor

Momentor uses features based on the latest habit/behaviour change theories and provides an extensive competency-based resource library to facilitate learning and practice. However, one feature that is most helpful to leverage insight from 360-degree feedback to actual practice is its Practice Plans which provide a structured way for clients to socially engineer applying new behaviours on-the-job. Practice Plans are based on the work of Peter Gollowizter and colleagues[6] who have demonstrated the power of a structured approach to goal implementation in recent meta-analytic studies.


Finally, this platform is used to provide a measure of goal progress to help evaluate the impact of the 360-degree intervention. The client can, at any time, use Momentor to go seek feedback from original raters of the 360 assessment (or others) to provide a metric about the progress they are making on their specific goals. Clients can also seek continuous feedback by asking the same or new raters to evaluate their goal progress. Once completed, clients can log back into Momentor to view their goal progress.

### Implications for Practice

Feedback is one of the necessary conditions for successful behaviour initiation and change over time. Although a number of other coaching and feedback models have attempted to outline the various proximal and distal outcomes, the Enlighten, Encourage and Enable model consists of three progressive stages, each impacted by individual and organisational variables but focused on individual behavioural change and targeting enhanced effectiveness. Although all of the existing coaching models include feedback as an essential component, few have addressed the dynamic nature of feedback and the importance of the personality of the coachee, the feedback source, the social environment in which it is given, and how it is perceived cognitively and accepted emotionally to ensure that multi-rater feedback will result in sustained behavioural change.

This theoretically-derived behaviour model provides a context for coaches to understand the dynamics of the behavioural change process and the special role that feedback plays in facilitating a readiness and sense of confidence to begin a developmental journey. The importance of this model is that it highlights the diverse coachee, coach, and organisational factors that appear throughout the multi-rater feedback literature to facilitate accurate self-awareness, self-directed learning, goal setting processes, and deliberate practice. The emphasis on more than just insight in this model is important in light of recent meta-analytical findings suggesting that effect sizes for transfer of management training interventions is generally low (particularly when seen by direct reports and peers) but can be improved significantly with opportunities for structured and deliberate practice[28].

This new Enlighten, Encourage and Enable model also emphasises the role of the coach's skills and the organisation's culture (e.g., manager's involvement to reinforce and be held accountable for successful completion of development plans of their talent) to initiate behavioural change, and attempts to recognise the fragility of sustaining these behaviours without relapsing.

Finally, given the current issues, challenges, and concerns about the potency of multi-rater feedback processes, this new behavioural change model helps to leverage evidence-based research to guide practitioners in avoiding doing harm. The Enlighten, Encourage and Enable model is based upon established individual change theories and is adapted specifically for the process of coaching and performance feedback[19], but merits further research to demonstrate its effectiveness to leverage awareness into long-term behavioural change.

Based on a synthesis of numerous multi-rater feedback reviews and our own one-year evaluation study of diverse 360-degree feedback processes used within a diverse communications and entertainment organisation[20], it is possible to synthesise some Best Practices to leverage desired individual and organisational outcomes:

1. Ensure that an adequate number and type of raters (8 to 9 in rater groups other than one's manager) are invited to provide feedback to the participant and that the composition of the final rater pool is discussed and agreed upon with their manager and/or coach[8].

2. Utilise either an internal or external coach, knowledgeable of the assessment and multi-rater feedback literature, to facilitate the interpretation of the multi-rater report and to minimise any negative reactions that might occur as a result of the feedback intervention.

3. Based on the findings of Rehbine (2007), hold coachee's managers accountable for meeting with their direct report to fully discuss and mutually agree upon a set of professional development action plans and then track and monitor progress over time with periodic follow-up discussions to ensure successful completion.

4. Focus the creation and implementation of an individual development plan on meaningful and measurable behaviours and activities that enhance individual learning and deliberate practice (e.g., special assignments, on-the-job experiences, tasks that build upon strengths and facilitate development opportunities).

5. Despite the recent popularity of focusing on strengths keep in mind that not all coachees will interpret their feedback in "balance" nor should they be automatically encouraged to leverage their strengths, as the overuse of these behaviours in some cases may result in fatal flaws as perceived by others (e.g., excessive use of participative or involvement-oriented decision making styles might be highly ineffective in crisis situations).

6. Repeat a multi-rater feedback process in 12 to 24 months following the first administration to create a mechanism to evaluate progress targeted to leveraging or strengthening specific skills over time.

7. Evaluate the reaction (formative) and impact (summative) of the multi-rater intervention from multiple perspectives (e.g., coachee, manager, and raters) to demonstrate the return on investment, individual behavioural change, and relevant organisational business outcomes.

Sustaining behavioural change for anyone is challenging even in the most ideal situations. The evidence-based limitations of feedback interventions along with an earlier meta-analysis by Kluger & DeNisi (1996) all support the idea that enhancing awareness and effectiveness of feedback depends on a complex interplay of intrapsychic, interpersonal, and organisational factors. Individual differences (e.g., personality) can impact the motivational level following feedback as well as the goal setting process. Coaches and consultants who deliver feedback or utilise multi-rater feedback interventions should become familiar with the diverse individual change models and factors that affect participant reactions and be particularly vigilant for minimising potential harm or actually decreasing engagement and performance following feedback.

The individual behavioural change model Enlighten, Encourage and Enable should be considered as an integrative way to leverage the impact of multi-rater feedback for facilitating both awareness and commitment to behavioural change efforts with an emphasis on sustaining behaviour over time. Hopefully, this model will extend current practice to focus more on the distal (behavioural change) rather than proximal (insight) outcomes inherent with the use of current feedback interventions by both coaches and organisations.

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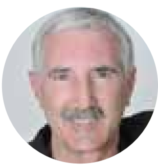

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# Better Talent Identification Through Assessment Centres

## Top Ten Tips

Nigel Evans

This article aims to give a practical 'in the field' spotlight on what is actually happening in assessment centres, with the intention of raising the standards of assessment centre practice.

Assessment centres have enjoyed a reputation as the superior method for assessing individuals for selection and development. Assessment methodology is well established[1] with specific research insights ever emerging[2]. However, assessment centres are plagued by practical issues that tend to limit their effectiveness[3].

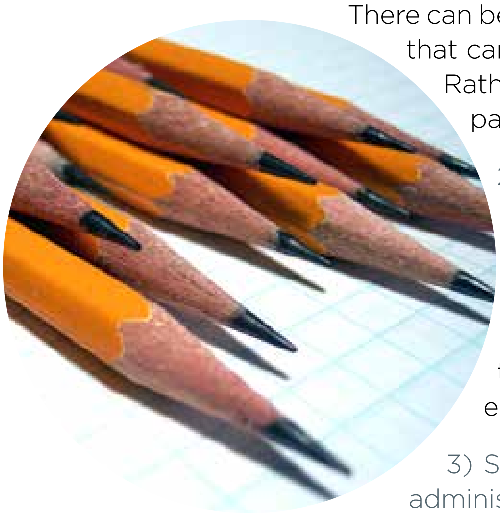
Whilst there are some classic texts to reference in order to understand assessment centre methodology[4], most practitioners learn more from concrete examples of what to do and what not to do.

Assessment centres have enjoyed a reputation as the superior method of assessment of individuals for selection and development.

With this in mind, this article draws on the recommendations of experienced assessors to provide a platform for practical suggestions of improving practice in assessment centre implementation. These top tips link directly to quality assurance work in assessment centre design and delivery with reference to British Assessment Centre Standards[5] and International Standards on Assessment in Organisations (ISO 10667).

**Top Ten Tips for Better Design and Delivery of Talent Assessment Centres.**

1) Competency Definitions: Redesign – do not automatically use as given.



There can be a lot of detail in a competency definition, yet how much of that can readily be observed in each assessment centre exercise? Rather than try to go for everything, focus on the parts that particular exercise is best able to elicit.

2) Assessor Training: Train – do not leave them untrained.

Assessing is a skill and can be readily taught, but people need time to practice. Furthermore, even skilled assessors, be they internal or external to the organisation, need some training on the specific centre to be delivered, as timetables, exercises, marking guides, and the like vary enormously.

3) Support Staff: Nominate administrators – do not skimp on administration support.

Assessors are there to do their principle job - that is, to assess well. They do not need administrative distractions like finding extra paper, printing out further guides, and taking lunch orders. Time is tight enough, so relieve the assessors of excessive administration tasks.

4) Role Players: Use trained ‘actors’ – do not let assessors ‘ham it up’.

In specific work simulations (e.g., meetings), role players interact with the participants so as to generate behaviour to be assessed. To gain the required consistency, use an actor who has also been trained to understand the whole process, rather than dragging in a spare assessor or employee.

5) Assessor-Candidate Ratios: Ratio of 2:1 is possible – do not go further than 1:2.

Sometimes there can appear to be more assessors in the room than participants. This is good, especially if you really need certainty on the specific behaviour assessed. Spreading assessors too thinly literally thins out their observation capacity.

6) Exercises: Bespoke is best – do not just take it off the shelf.

If you are aiming to assess top talent for your organisation, why blindly rely on generic exercises? There are exceptions (see tip number 7: Psychometrics), but specifically designed exercises will get at the core of the behaviour you are specifically looking for at the specific level.

7) Psychometrics: Use experts – do not forget to audit their qualifications.

Standardised psychometric tools are very powerful in the hands of an expert. Unfortunately, many 'users' do not have the formally recognised qualifications in broader test use which includes applying test scores to assessment centre competency models. These broader qualifications can be checked on national professional registers.

8) Scoring: Unify scoring systems – do not use multiple scale scores.

Grading participants on an A-E system should go across the board for all assessment exercises. If you have a 2 rating, 80th percentile, sten 6, 'good' comment, or anything else but an A-E in your end scoring column then something is wrong!

9) Weighting: Be actuarial – do not 'guesstimate'.

Certain competencies and even specific exercises may not have equal weighting. This is fine with supporting evidence, yet decide and confirm all this before you get to the comparison of participants. Putting all scores in a spreadsheet is useful to then create the scoring algorithm; do check this forensically before making that top hiring or promotion decision.

10) Providing Results to the Panel: Discuss – do not just distant report scores.

The time and effort of designing and delivering an assessment centre does not have to simply boil down to a composite score. You will have a lot more information to paint the picture or deep dive detail for the panel who will ultimately make the final hiring or promotion decision. Given the assessment centre is usually only one part in the decision making process, feeding through key points will help inform next steps for combining data points or focussing final interviews.

**Summary**

There is a large 'bandwidth' of practice – ranging from what could be classified as 'Best' to 'Questionable'. Hopefully these top tips will help you stay on the right side. Illustrations of best practice show what is possible to achieve within an organisational context, especially when consultants are challenged to rationalise assessment centre time and budgets.

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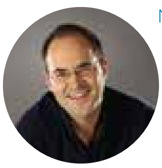


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# Leadership Remains a Hot Topic

## but why is it even on the agenda?

Lucy Beaumont

The indications are that human beings have always thrived in groups more successfully than as lone warriors, and that those groups develop a clear hierarchy, or pecking order; leaderless groups are thought to be less likely to thrive than groups with a hierarchy.

This indicates that we are wired to look for leaders, and that some will have the characteristics which mark them out as leaders.

This debate has intensified in recent years as 'bench strength' becomes an increasing concern for organisations. Hay Group's Leadership 2030 research highlighted upcoming mega-trends, including globalisation and digitisation, which are set to create a tougher and rapidly evolving business landscape, leading to a complex environment for leaders to navigate. With the recent recession, leaders are expected to enable their people to do more with less. Ultimately the indications are that the demands on leaders in the future will intensify. Put this in the context of global talent shortages and we find ourselves with the simple fact that there are less potential future leaders out there. Indeed, with an aging workforce and the retirement of baby boomers, immigration and expected birth rates will not balance the workforce losses in the UK and USA, amongst others, therefore compounding the difficulties in identifying the high potential amongst high performers.

Organisations are alive to the need to identify, nurture and develop their future leaders, but with such high stakes, are we always getting it right? And what happens when it goes wrong?

The classic trap is for managers to mistake high performance for high potential – we would warn against relying on managerial judgments. In a recent study with Royal Mail Group, we were able to demonstrate the potential pitfalls of relying too heavily on manager performance ratings, by tracking actual rate of promotion over time. What we found was that managers tend to prize ambition, being impactful and building a network most highly. However, what actually predicted rapid promotion through the organisation were more subtle factors, such as thinking strategically and being the kind of individual who seeks and embraces change. This leads us to conclude that manager ratings should not be relied on in isolation when selecting future leaders. In fact, it's less likely for a line manager to be able to identify some of these less obvious factors. When they do, some managers may even consider these individuals challenging and troublesome. Our evidence shows that the predictors of future potential are not always immediately obvious or even recognised and valued, which demonstrates a clear need for a more scientific and robust assessment process.

### What to Look For in a Leader

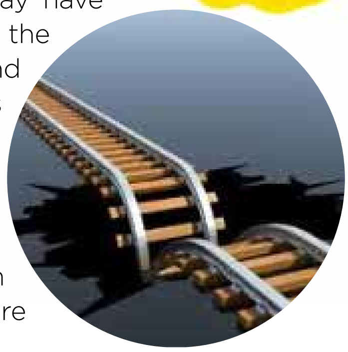
Having said that manager ratings are a risky way to select high potentials, what are the factors that we should be looking for and how do we find them? The emergent literature in the field of leadership potential reveals a number of issues. Firstly, there is a lack of comprehensive, empirically validated research, which genuinely links individual characteristics to future success as leaders. In its place, limited range models abound, drawing on both the wider leadership literature and studies in specific situational circumstances.

However, a number of recurring themes do occur. Firstly, an orientation towards learning and initiating change is frequently cited as one of the key differentiators. In relation to the emotional characteristics related to leadership potential, resilience under pressure, courage, and determination, and a focus on action and ambition have all been linked to potential. A further key area relates to the strategic aspects of leadership roles, with a threshold level of cognitive ability or 'smarts' seen as a key input, alongside an orientation and capacity to develop innovative strategies then execute them. Finally, the people element has been seen as increasingly important by many writers due to increasing specialisation of roles and interdependency between individuals and teams. Along with the wider challenge of globalisation affecting many organisations, this has demanded new ways of working and leading which are significantly different to a traditional 'command and control' approach. In this regard, the capacity to collaborate effectively with others, network effectively, and build deep rather than transactional relationships has been seen as a key element of leadership potential, alongside the ability to persuade, influence, and engage others successfully. Other factors such as adequate market and technical knowledge and experience have also been cited as key threshold capabilities. Aside from behavioural factors, evidence shows that motives and values are a critical element in a leader's profile. After all, what we value and consider important dictates what we pay attention to and reward, and therefore the culture that we create. Similarly, an individual might have all of the tools to lead at their disposal but not have the desire or motivation to want to lead.

It's clear that there are a number of factors that mark someone out as a leader. For many of us some of these factors will be clear and differentiating strengths. However, differentiating strengths bring with them the risk of being overplayed to the detriment of that person's performance and relationships. Can the very cause of your success sow the seeds of your downfall? If not carefully managed, a range of underlying personality characteristics can drive experienced, successful leaders off the rails. Assessments can identify these characteristics early, enabling awareness, management, and ultimately avoidance of leadership derailment.

**Too Much of a Good Thing**

Derailment is said to have happened when leaders – who may have shown a good record of success and who seem to possess the necessary skills, abilities, and knowledge to succeed – suddenly and spectacularly fail. Aside from obvious and often cited examples from the banking industry, these characteristics are raising their head every day in the workplace. Sometimes they lead to derailment but more often they chip away at the individual's effectiveness by harming relationships and the individual's own judgment and performance. We talk about leadership a lot when discussing derailment, because their performance affects more people, but there's something for many of us to look out for.



Think of the individual who can be a shrewd judge of character: you can't pull the wool over their eyes and they seem to have a knack for reading others' intentions. Now think of that individual when they are not quite at their best: could they be described as irritable, can they too readily feel persecuted, and do they see hostility in almost any action?

Now think of the confident, decisive, charismatic individual. They've probably been labelled 'one for the future' from a young age and are now starting to fulfil that promise; are there times when that person fails to listen? Do they explain away imperfections in their approach and results?

Another example might be the methodical and structured operator. Their organisation and attention to detail is impressive. Now consider their ability to delegate and 'let go'. Do they focus enough on strategy? Do they annoy people with their persnickety ways? Now, consider what this means for their ability to take calculated risks.

These are straightforward examples of derailment in action. Sometimes, the outcome is disaster; more often they are the factors that lead to that well-known mantra – people leave managers, not organisations.

Candidates often talk about Jekyll and Hyde when first introduced to the concept of derailment. This implies having a 'split personality'. Derailment is not that; it's more like 'too much of a good thing'. In other words: overplayed strengths.

The derailment school of thought says that strengths can be overplayed, and that they are overplayed when we are less able to self-monitor; most likely when we are under pressure or stressed (over-aroused), but also when we are bored or just don't care anymore (under-aroused). Then, the very characteristics that may have been the source of our success to-date begin to work against us.

So, what can be done to address these factors and manage the risks? Put simply, 'forewarned is forearmed'. For individual leaders, self-awareness is key. Leaders need to understand the aspects of their personality that could lead to derailment. Proactive management of these factors is an important part of ensuring stable high-performance and career progression. Coaching, development, and experiential learning are likely to be required to help the individual to accept, better understand, and manage their derailment factors. For organisations that want to manage the risk of leadership failure, assessing personality traits can help to spot an individual's susceptibility to derailment at an early stage. When assessing for senior roles and identifying employees with high potential, a sophisticated personality questionnaire should be used to provide insight into the individual's personality and how this may, under certain conditions, lead to derailment. Structured development programmes can then be put in place for anyone deemed likely to derail. Putting in place the necessary assessment and developmental support is critical. Only then will leaders be able to manage successfully the challenges their approach could bring.

## Assessing Future Leadership Potential

So, we know what makes a future leader and we are also aware that these factors are multi-faceted and often under the surface. This clearly necessitates a requirement for a high quality, robust and predictive assessment process. We've established that manager ratings don't cut the mustard. So, what do we recommend are the ingredients when making judgments on potential? Those ingredients are:

- Assessment of those individuals' motives and drives – what drives them and do they want to lead?
- Personality assessments – to what degree do they possess the emotional, strategic, and social traits that we know are critical, and where might there be risks for derailment?
- Ability assessments – what's their capability to navigate the inevitable complexity that they will face?

Psychometrics are undoubtedly valuable to identify high potential, but to get the most out of them we recommend that they are interpreted by experts in conjunction with an in-depth interview.

So far, we are talking about self-report and expert analysis, but what about their current behaviours? 360-degree processes provide valuable insight to get the views of stakeholders, colleagues, and most importantly, direct reports.

This provides the most powerful combination to identify high potential, manage their derailment risks, and fulfil their potential as leaders. The stakes are just too high to take shortcuts when assessing future leadership potential. It is vital to organisations that want to get ahead to prioritise the appropriate time, effort, and investment in getting it right.

## About the Author

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Prior to her role in the International team, Lucy worked as a Senior Research and Development Consultant at Talent Q where she was heavily involved with delivering client solutions including customised projects. This included mapping client competencies to Talent Q assessments, client validations to identify what predicts success within different populations and group analysis projects to understand the profiles of groups and where training and development might be best deployed. Lucy worked closely with UK and International clients including Phones4U, Royal Bank of Scotland, STA Travel and Carlsberg.

Lucy previously worked for QinetiQ where she was involved in assessment centre design and delivery, human factors interactions and survey design work.

# Re-thinking Recruitment:
## Applying Science to the Practical World

Dexter Davies Smith

Recruitment is a fundamental part of business and, in today's climate, is considered to be more important than ever. The value of human capital has put new emphasis on the importance of attracting and employing the right staff. The methods of identifying key talent vary wildly, from conventional methods such as application forms and CVs through to overelaborate 10-week televised interviews at the mercy of Lord Sugar.

What many people might not be aware of is that academic research provides clear insights as to which recruitment processes best predict future performance for potential employees, and these techniques are very often cost effective and easy to administer. Yet these insights have fallen on deaf ears – so much so that reasons for the gap between research and practice concerning personnel selection have become research questions of their own.

So, imagine if your colleague upped and left tomorrow: how would your company handle the recruitment process? We begin our examination of recruitment by making a business case that it is essential companies make recruitment a priority. A good starting point is to explore all the avenues in which hires can financially affect the company, whether it be positively or negatively.

## The True Value of Recruitment and the Cost of Getting It Wrong

Business is changing at a faster rate than ever before. The western world has shifted from production industries to service industries, and with that change, we have seen the importance of staff contribution rise and rise. In modern industry, the cost of hiring the wrong person against the benefit of hiring the right person can be astronomical. If you thought the money spent on football players was excessive, this year Google spent 3.2 billion – yes, billion – to acquire the man hailed as one of the godfathers of the iPod. But that's Google, what they spend on a head-honcho and what we invest on graduate recruitment or middle management can't be comparable?

Well, why not?

Whilst the figures may be drastically different, the principle remains the same. Google are willing to invest in their recruitment to get the best staff because they know having the best staff is a competitive advantage.

It is not uncommon to hear companies object that they can't afford to put extra resources into recruitment, and quite often that is as much about time as it is about money. But, if we stop and think, it is possibly the most dangerous area to cut corners and take the short-sighted approach. Let's have a look at what happens when companies can't afford to invest in recruitment...

## Hiring a Member of Staff Who Goes on to Under-perform

If you'd like to add figures relevant to your company and sector to this, please do so, but the main aim here is to appreciate the true costs involved in the life-cycle of an employee who under performs compared to the up-front investment of better selection processes. This comprises many factors including:

- Initial costs of the hiring process first time round. This includes the time of your people involved with this process, any expenses for external assistance, cost of any tools used. This is commonly misconstrued as the entire cost of recruitment.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics in the US reported that average job tenancy is now 4 to 5 years, so let's add in 4 or 5 years wages. Feel free to add any additional costs like Class 1 contributions at this stage.
- Beyond wages, you have the cost for training this member of staff. Over £100 billion is spent per year on training. Include money spent on

external training and the valuable time of internal staff training this employee and the figure soon racks up.

- Return on investment costs – by hiring the under-performing member of staff we not only incur the cost of missed opportunities, mistakes, and disruption caused against the baseline of performing as expected, but miss out on all the increased profit from an over-achieving individual. As you can imagine, this swing can be huge.

- Severance costs, if it gets to that point. This includes direct financial implications, the lost time of important members of staff to go through the process, and also the disruptive effect this has on the team.

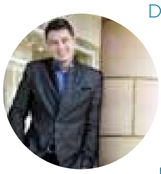
- We are then back at stage one, needing to recruit again. In fact, 75% of all recruitment demand is to fill positions left empty through loss of staff.

So the true cost of recruitment is far from the initial step of getting the position filled. In fact, that is likely to be the smallest cost. It's very much like purchasing a mobile phone on contract; you can get a great deal on the cost of the hand-set, but what you find is you end up paying far more in the long run – and at least with the phone, you're guaranteed to get one that works!

Taking recruitment seriously does not mean it needs to be an expensive, laborious and time consuming process.

Hopefully, that puts into context why recruitment needs to be taken seriously and why the cost of getting recruitment right the first time is minimal compared to the cost of getting it wrong and having to repeat the process, or being stuck with an under-performing member of staff.

## About the Author



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# Authentic Leadership:
## The Courage to Lead

Dr Fiona Beddoes-Jones, FRSA

More than ever before, leaders are having their thoughts and behaviours examined under a microscope. We now face a call to action regarding the need for a new philosophy of leadership. We need an intelligent, compassionate leadership approach that is pro-social, purposeful, and transformational; one that creates meaningful dialogue and meaningful relationships within and between organisations. Potentially, Authentic Leadership may have the answer. This article explains what Authentic Leadership is, the reasons behind the desire for Authentic Leaders and Authentic Leadership, and then goes on to explore how leaders can become more Authentic.

## What is Authentic Leadership?

Authentic Leadership links who you are as a person – your beliefs and values – with how you lead and manage, i.e. your personality, thinking, emotions, and behaviours. It is cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. Moreover, it is relational. It is less about traditional models of power and control and more about leader influence and the quality of follower relationships.

### Individual and organisational benefits of Authentic Leadership

Research[1] suggests that the individual benefits of leading an authentic life include increased self-confidence, a greater general feeling of being successful at work and in life, better quality relationships, and greater feelings of happiness and well-being combined with decreased stress, anxiety, and illness. Overall, being authentic at work and leading an authentic life can be said to engender greater health and even, research suggests, longevity.

Authentic Leadership has been shown to include increased employee engagement, greater creativity and more effective problem solving, an increased sense of employee well-being, lower absence and sickness rates, and decreased employee turnover[2]. Therefore, organisationally the benefits include not only growing more effective leaders from within, but also inspiring a better working culture, more collaborative relationships, and improved team working. At every level, individually and organisationally, Authentic Leadership can be considered to be a 'good thing'.

Authentic Leadership is less about traditional models of power and control and more about influence and the quality of follower relationships.

Except that interestingly, not everyone wants to be an Authentic Leader. As this article explains, Authentic Leadership is an ideal and cannot be said to be an easy discipline or an easy journey. It means having to be your best self, consistently and congruently, and being a role model for others. It's hard work being an object of constant scrutiny, and unsurprisingly, not everyone wants to invest the cognitive and emotional effort required.

### My PhD research

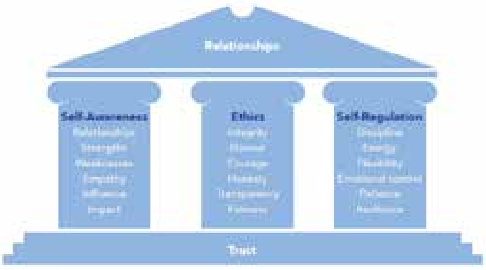
Unlike previous research into Authentic Leadership which used student population samples with little or no leadership experience, my doctoral research into Authentic Leadership used senior UK Royal Air Force (RAF) officers and senior UK business leaders drawn from the Institute of Directors and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Overall, the average experience across the two groups was twenty years, so we can be certain that the research results, i.e. the Three Pillars model, is both statistically robust and related to real-life leadership.

## The Three Pillars of Authentic Leadership

### Self-Awareness

The first pillar is Self-Awareness: knowing your real strengths and weaknesses; understanding how other people perceive you; being acutely aware of how your thoughts and emotions influence your language and behaviours and, therefore, the impact and influence that you have on others. It is the ability to articulate your core beliefs and values, and understand your personal boundaries and emotional and intellectual drivers. In short, it is knowing who you are and what you value, thereby building a secure sense of self that provides an anchor for your decisions and actions.

## Ethics




The second pillar of the Three Pillars model is Ethics. Sitting neatly within the ethical pillar of Authentic Leadership is professional integrity, your ethical decision-making; those core beliefs and values that underpin your personal leadership philosophy; the courage to remain steadfast in the face of ethical dissent or wrong-doing by others; and having a pro-social leadership ethos and the desire to serve the wider community. In addition, it includes honesty, openness, trust, transparency; the moral capacity to judge dilemmas from multiple perspectives; and being able to take into consideration different stakeholder needs.

## Self-Regulation

Self-Regulation is the third pillar of Authentic Leadership and is closely connected with how well you know and understand yourself. It concerns self-management: your focus; your self-discipline; your ability to be actively and deliberately in control of your thoughts, emotions and behaviours; your levels of tolerance and patience; how you manage your energy; and your physical, mental and emotional resilience.

## Why I call it 'The Courage to Lead'

Your leadership style is intensely personal; no two people will ever lead in exactly the same way. By looking at the original meaning of the word courage, we can see that it corresponds with Authentic Leadership's links between emotional and physical bravery and compassion.

## The ABCs of Authentic Leadership

The ABCs of authentic leadership are: Authenticity (being true to yourself and your values), Bravery (having the courage to lead, particularly in the face of danger or dissent), and Compassion (leading with empathy and concern for the well-being of others).

**“Not everyone can be a leader. Many executives do not have what it takes to develop the skilful authenticity necessary for effective leadership”[2]**

**Goffee and Jones (2006)**

## The 10 Principals of Authentic Leadership

1. People will be authentic in their own ways regarding their personal leadership style.
2. Authentic Leadership involves leading with heart and courage, i.e. passion and compassion.
3. Leader self-awareness isn't enough; the term also encompasses other awareness.
4. Trust is an output of Authentic Leadership, not a input.
5. Being yourself isn't enough; Authentic Leaders are their best selves.
6. You are always a role model (whether you like it or not); whatever you do, you give others permission to do.
7. Authentic Leadership is the sum total of who you are, what you know, what you believe and what you value, and your emotional responses to those things.
8. Authentic Leadership is an embodied attitude of mind; it's as much of a way of being in the world as it is a way of doing leadership.
9. You need to learn to lead yourself so others choose to follow; Authentic Leadership is about relationships, not power.
10. As Authentic Leadership is relational it concerns the relationship that you have with yourself as much as it is about the relationships that you have with others; Authentic Leaders are their own harshest critic and their own best friend.

Leadership is relational; it is created in the dynamic space between a leader and those who choose to follow them.

### Mori poll research[3]

In 2009, a Gallup research team asked more than 10,000 followers what they wanted from their leaders. The answers will not surprise you if you are a follower, but may have escaped your attention if you are a leader tied up in the meetings and activities that constitute your normal working day. The four things that followers want from their leaders are not task-focused or results-driven. They are neither operational nor strategic, and they say less about what a leader does

than who a leader is in terms of personal characteristics and values.

The first thing followers want most from their leaders is to be able to trust them; to believe that what they say is true. The second thing is for a leader to be compassionate; to have empathy and to care about their well-being. Thirdly, followers want stability, which is something that many leaders either overlook or simply don't seem to realise in their relentless drive for change, performance improvements and financial savings. Finally, followers want to feel hopeful about the future, something that is impossible without trust being present.

### The three reasons leaders fail

The Three Pillars not only provide a route map for the development of Authentic Leaders, they also identify the three reasons that leaders fail. Historically, leadership failure may have involved a deficit in knowledge or expertise. However, modern leadership failures invariably seem to involve either a lack of self/other awareness, a lack of self-regulation/discipline or a moral/ethical deficit. In other words, a leader found wanting in any one of the Three Pillars of Authentic Leadership will not achieve their potential and may, ultimately, fail. For leaders to learn what works and what doesn't, understanding the reasons for leadership failure is as important as understanding the components of leadership success.

### The 'Hitler Question'

Authentic Leadership means much more than simply 'being genuine' or 'being true to yourself'. After all, you could argue that all leaders are being true to themselves and that every leadership style is 'authentic', despite its good or bad qualities. You can be an authentic leader, being true to yourself and your own beliefs and values, as Hitler was, without being an Authentic Leader. Authentic Leadership, with a capital A, encompasses the Three Pillars of Authentic Leadership; that is, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation and Ethics.

## Ten Steps to developing your Authentic Leadership capacity

Read the ten Principles of Authentic Leadership carefully.

1 Consider the implications that each one of them has for you.

2 Think about how your life so far has contributed to making you into the leader that you are today. Are you being driven by events or people from your past which are no longer relevant to the kind of leader you want to become?

3 Explore the Three Pillars of Authentic Leadership and develop your understanding regarding the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural elements which sit within each one.

4 Select between three and five elements and begin to pay particular attention to them with a view to doing more of them, more often. Self-awareness, for example, involves both self-reflection (after an event) and reflexivity (awareness at the time an event is happening).

5 Remember that it's not enough to only think of yourself; self-awareness also includes understanding your impact on others and how they might be thinking and feeling too, so there's much more to it than there may appear to be at first glance.

6 Begin writing a reflective/reflexive diary so you can coach yourself and develop your own 'voice' as a leader; become your own harshest critic and your own best friend.

7 Request some kind of 360-degree appraisal if possible so you can understand how others see you; the more self aware you are, the more your scores will match others'.

8 Ask for a coach or find yourself a mentor. These don't need to be limited to work; you may find that you already have someone in your life with whom you find it easy to talk and can usefully discuss things, someone who encourages you to look at things from a different perspective. Be clear about your boundaries: what's private and what you're prepared to share publicly.

9 Consider how your personality contributes to the kind of leader you are and therefore what kind of Authentic Leader you want to be.

10 Speak to other managers and leaders about the difficulties and ethical issues that your role entails. You may find that they share your concerns or have experienced similar situations themselves in the past. At the very least, you won't feel so alone in your leadership role.

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**“Courage is the ladder on which all the other virtues mount”**

**Clare Bootle Luce, American diplomat and playwright 1903-1987**

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