

Tests can help you in your career search by helping you to understand more about your own strengths and weaknesses and to select a career that is a close match with your abilities, personality and interests.



© Denise Taylor

Amazing People
3 Brook House Barns,
Aston on Carrant,
Tewkesbury GL20 8HL
01684 772888

www.amazingpeople.co.uk
hello@amazingpeople.co.uk

Top 10 frequently asked questions about psychometric tests

1. What is a psychometric test?

A psychometric test is a standard way of assessing particular aspects of human behaviour. Broadly there are two types of test: those which measure maximum performance or how well you can do something; and those which measure 'typical' performance or how you tend to react to particular situations. The first type covers most ability tests, the second inventories or questionnaires, which measure personality, motivation, values, attitudes and interests.

2. How do psychometric tests work?

Tests are carefully designed so that each person who completes a particular test has the same experience, i.e. they are presented with the same questions and have the same amount of time in which to answer them. The raw score (usually the number of correct answers) is then converted to a standard score by comparison with a representative sample of people who have completed the test in the past. It is then possible to say whether a person has scored above or below average, and how much above or below.

3. What sort of things can be tested?

There are more than 30 human abilities that can be tested, such as general intelligence, verbal, numerical and spatial reasoning, and mechanical aptitude, speed & accuracy of information processing; and well over 30 aspects of personality, ranging from emotional sensitivity and warmth to dominance and tension. Tests can also measure colour vision and reaction times.

4. Who uses tests?

Employers are increasingly incorporating aptitude tests into assessment procedures – both for selection of staff and for development and counselling purposes. Tests which are professionally constructed and measured can provide objective, reliable and relevant information concerning the likelihood of job success and satisfaction. Assessment centres typically combine the information gained from aptitude tests with that obtained from other questionnaires and exercises such as those measuring personality and emotional intelligence. These are used in addition to other elements

of an assessment centre such as presentations, case studies and interviews.

Tests are also used in guidance to help people to understand more about their abilities, personality, and interests and so help them to identify suitable careers.

5. Can you prepare for tests?

It is difficult to prepare for a test where you need to deal with information provided as part of the test. However, you can practice technique, which will make you feel more confident. There are numerous books containing practice material and it is also possible to access example tests through the Internet.

See <http://www.amazingpeople.co.uk/tests.htm>

For numerical tests you will often need to be able to calculate percentages and deal with ratios. You may want to practice doing these type of calculations to ensure you can do them on the day.

6. Will I get details on tests when I apply for a job?

If you apply for a job and you are invited to a test session you should receive details on the tests and some practice information. If you don't, I recommend you ask for some as it is good practice for employers to provide it.

7. How are tests used to select people for jobs?

Tests are often the first part of an assessment centre and are used to measure people against key abilities identified as being important in a job. They are crucial in reducing the number of applicants to form a short list. On other occasions they are part of the selection procedure along with other elements, for example, the interview, presentation and group discussion.

8. How can tests help me?

Tests can help you in your career search by helping you to understand more about your own strengths and weaknesses and to select a career that is a close match with your abilities, personality and interests.

In selection, tests can ensure that you are assessed fairly in a competitive situation where your results are treated objectively.

The outcome of most assessment centres is based on the combination of data from different sources. Even if you don't feel confident about your performance in the tests, you may have other strengths, which will be taken into account.

Produced by Denise Taylor, Chartered Occupational Psychologist and Director of Amazing People. Denise is a careers expert who specialises in helping individuals achieve career satisfaction and in working with organisations who want to have a motivated and productive workforce.

Personality questionnaires can help increase your self knowledge which can make you more effective with other people and in the way you work. Interest inventories can expand your career possibilities by providing details on jobs that tie in with your interests.

When used in career guidance, the results help you to understand more about your self, so you know that you have strengths in one area but not in another. However, when they are used for selection a cut off point will be created, either an absolute one, you need a minimum score to be acceptable, or the top x number of people go through to the next round.

9. Can I fail a test?

Tests are not thought of as pass/fail as scores are usually presented as percentiles. So a score at the 60th percentile does not mean a score of 60%, it means you scored better than 60% of a comparable group.

You cannot fail a personality questionnaire and should always to given an opportunity to discuss your results with a qualified member of staff, this will enable you to provide examples to support the responses you gave.

10. How are decisions made?

The outcome of most assessment centres is based on the combination of data from different sources. Even if you don't feel confident about your performance in the tests, you may have other strengths, which will be taken into account. Employers often offer the opportunity to obtain feedback on test performance. This may help you to understand your own abilities and may aid you in career thinking. Sometimes you need to ask, so do be proactive.

Results obtained from professionally used tests will be kept confidential.

Good luck and for more hints and tips read:

<http://snipurl.com/z4he>

What clients say:

"The best careers counselling I have come across, a much more personal approach and frankly, well ahead of all the others. Well worth the money." **Andy Richards**

"I have been recommending you to lots of people, I wish I had taken this step a long time ago". **Fiona O'Connor**

"This programme can really help you to find out who you are: It will confirm some of your thoughts about what you might be good at, but will also present you with new possibilities. I felt reassured and inspired by the sessions". **Frances Clemson.**

"I am always apprehensive when engaging other providers to work with my valued clients but any concerns were unnecessary with Denise. Indeed, I was proud to be associated with her. Denise is very helpful, flexible and professional. She responds very quickly to requests and goes out of her way to be helpful. She fully understood the sensitivities of the situation and kept me suitably informed of progress throughout, which I greatly appreciated. I would have no hesitation in working with Denise again and I would highly recommend her to others". **Phil Gott**

Brought to you by Denise Taylor, Chartered Occupational Psychologist and Director of Amazing People. Denise is a careers expert who specialises in helping individuals achieve career satisfaction and to take a systematic approach to job search.

Do you need help with job search—whether it's CV preparation, interview practice, increasing your profile or self marketing, let Denise guide you through the maze so you get a job quicker, make more money and have fun while you do it.

To receive regular tips, direct to your inbox each month, sign up at

amazingpeople-50638@autocontactor.com

www.amazingpeople.co.uk

www.amazingpeople.biz