



MAPIEN RADAR WHITEPAPER SERIES:

# Psychometric Assessments

Where, why & how you should use them...

# What is a Psychometric Assessment?

**A psychometric assessment is a scientific and standardised method of measuring the abilities &/or behavioural preferences of an individual.**

The important words here are **'scientific'** & **'standardised'** - as they refer to assessments that are based on peer-reviewed scientific research and constructed by professionals to ensure validity and reliability (that is, it measures what we say it measures and it does so consistently).

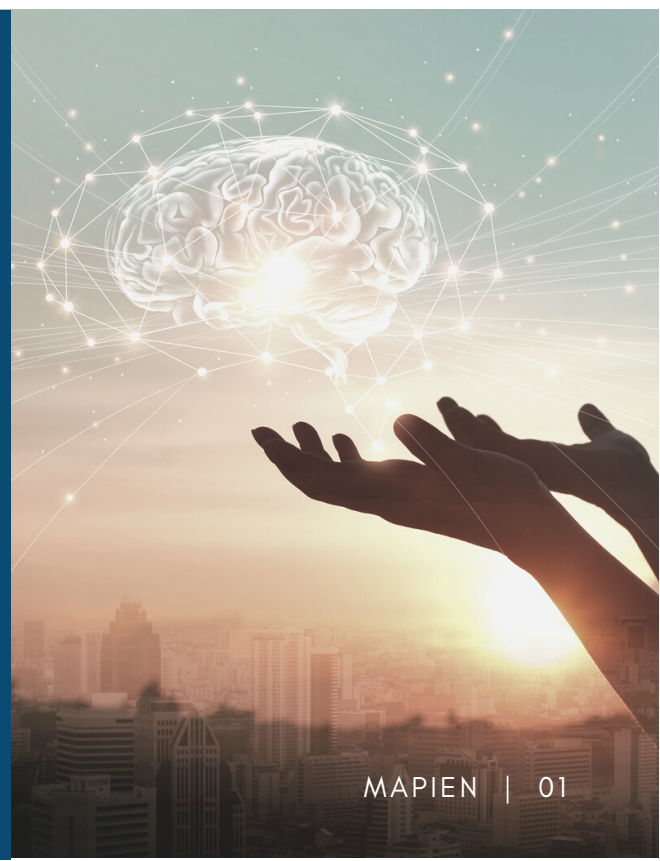
There is a wide variety of such assessments available and, whilst they can largely be categorised into either abilities assessments or behavioural-style assessments, they are able to explore numerous different ways that people differ in their capabilities, traits, and preferences. Some of the more commonly measured concepts include problem-solving ability, analytical ability, emotional intelligence, personality, and safety awareness.

**Basically, if the brain can do it, an assessment can be developed to measure it.**

This makes psychometric assessments a powerful and valuable means of developing a deeper understanding of an individual, without necessarily having to meet with them (at which time, our impressions can be prone to unconscious biases).

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79% OF HR  
PROFESSIONALS BELIEVE  
THAT UNCONSCIOUS BIAS  
EXISTS IN RECRUITMENT &  
SUCCESSION PLANNING  
DECISIONS





# Where to use a Psychometric Assessment ... & why?



**In a broad sense, psychometric assessments are normally used in two main contexts within a workplace.**

The first is in **recruitment and selection**, where psychometric assessments can provide information on the level of aptitude an individual is likely to possess for a specific role (based on ability assessments), and the level of fit that the individual will have with the organisation or a specific work team (based on behavioural-style assessments, values or attitude assessments, emotional intelligence assessments, etc).

The information provided by these assessments increases the likelihood of a 'correct hire' (someone who satisfies the requirements of the job, the team, and the organisation), and provides valuable insight into the best ways to support this person with onboarding and engagement.

This approach to recruitment can have a considerable operational and financial benefit for an organisation, with the cost of an 'incorrect hire' estimated to be up to 250% of the salary of the role in some industries.

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THE TYPICAL COST OF A RECRUITMENT ERROR CAN BE UP TO 40% OF THE ANNUAL SALARY OF THE ROLE

# Where & why?

CONT...



These estimates consider the numerous and varied 'indirect costs' that come with making the 'wrong' selection, such as:

- Reduced productivity
- Training time for the incorrect hire, and then their replacement
- Higher workloads and fatigue for existing team members
- Poor culture fit which disrupts the cohesion of the existing team
- Reduced engagement, overall satisfaction, and commitment across team members, which may ultimately lead to further turnover and hiring costs.

While the exact costs will vary by industry, role type & level, psychometric assessments are clearly a critical step in raising the chances of making the best hire possible and, when utilised correctly, such assessments are one of the most effective risk management strategies in recruitment & selection.

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The second main context is **personal development**, which can include coaching & mentoring, leadership development, and career progression.

In this context, ability and behavioural-style assessments provide valuable insights into the strengths and areas of opportunity for an individual, be it for their current role or a role towards which they wish to progress.

These insights can then be used to identify valuable training & development opportunities and/or organisational support systems that can get the best out of the individual and their team in facilitating them to work effectively together.



# How to use a Psychometric Assessment



**On a technical level, there are various important factors in the use of a psychometric assessment; however, some of the broader considerations for starting the process of psychometric assessments are 'relevance' & 'integration'.**

A psychometric assessment is *relevant* if it suitably measures only key criteria for that role. Indeed, psychometric assessments need to be selected based on the role to which they are being applied. For example, psychometric assessments for a machinery operator may appropriately include an assessment of safety awareness, whereas this may be less relevant (& therefore less ethically sound) to administer within a less safety-critical role, such as an administration assistant. Similarly, whilst administering ability assessments which compare an individual's results against managers and professionals might be appropriate for a senior executive, this comparison would be less relevant to an entry-level role.

A psychometric assessment should also typically not be used in isolation, regardless of whether in a recruitment and selection context or a development context. *They should instead be integrated* with various other sources of information, such as interviews & observations, to arrive at a more holistic understanding of the individual. It is this broader understanding that should then be used - appropriately and fairly - to inform decisions relating to the recruitment, selection, and/or development of the individual.

The reason for this is that human beings are highly complex - **like a jigsaw puzzle** - and, in that sense, the more of the puzzle pieces that we can gather through psychometric assessments and other methods the more complete of a picture that we can assemble.

These other puzzle pieces can come from other evidence-based selection methods & testing such as:

- ❧ Structured interviews
- ❧ Work sample assessments
- ❧ Reference checks (when done with structure & skill)

It is also important to be mindful that some psychometric assessments can also only be interpreted by suitably qualified or accredited individuals.



## Connect with us!

If you would like to further discuss psychometric assessments, and how they may benefit you &/or your workplace, please contact us:

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