

## **Recruitment Testing: Put your best foot forward to secure your next job!**

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Securing a new role is a very stressful experience for many people. For many the difficulty begins with identifying their career path, for others it is writing a resume and cover letter that accurately reflects their skills, achievements, personality and potential. For a large majority the challenge extends to the interview process. It is becoming more common for employers to now include some form of 'testing' as part of their recruitment process. The words 'Psychometric Testing' can be enough to stop people from progressing with a role but it need not be that way.

### **Psychometric testing: what is it?**

When it comes down to it there are really only two types of psychometric tests: one to determine cognitive intelligence, or IQ, and the other to test for emotional intelligence, or EQ.

IQ testing refers to Ability Tests such as verbal reasoning and numerical skills. EQ testing on the other hand refers to measuring an individual's ability to cope with stress, influence others, establish interpersonal relationships and other behaviours they may demonstrate.

Testing such as this is becoming more and more popular as employers are faced with the challenges associated with recruiting and retaining employees. Finding suitable staff is a challenge but retaining key players is an even bigger one. Ensuring you get the right person for the role at the very beginning increases the likelihood of keeping them for the longer term. Research shows that an individual's EQ indicates not only how well they are likely to fit within the company in terms of culture but also the level of job performance that can be expected. It therefore looks as though this form of testing is here to stay!

### **Psychometric testing: how can I prepare?**

#### **Preparing for Ability Tests**

When it comes to Ability Tests you can not 'cram' study! In order to improve performance in these type of tests however consider the following:

##### Preparation for Verbal Ability Testing

- Read books, newspaper, business journals and reports.
- Do crosswords.
- Play word games.

##### Preparation for Numerical Ability Testing

- Practice doing arithmetic with and without a calculator.
- Do number puzzles from the newspapers.
- Read financial reports.
- Study data presented in tables, charts or graphs in the newspapers, journals etc.

Another good idea to help you prepare mentally is to speak to your potential employer to find out what you can about the tests so that you know what to expect. This will reduce your anxiety and increase the

likelihood of solid performance. Find out what test you will be completing? Will it be focusing on your numerical ability or your verbal ability or both? Will it be timed? Can you bring a calculator with you?

### **Preparing for Personality Tests**

In personality testing there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. It is important that you answer the questions honestly rather than try and guess what the tester is looking for. Tests such as these usually have social desirability scales in them which focuses on whether or not the responses are consistent.

### **Preparing for the testing session**

Before the session

- Have a good night sleep so that you feel refreshed and alert.
- Allow plenty of time to get to the venue. Consider a 'trial run' if you have not been to the location before.
- Remember to take your reading glasses or hearing aid with you. Pack your bag the night before if there is any chance you will forget these items.

At the session

- Listen carefully to the instructions and ask any questions if you are unsure. Do not be afraid to ask a question that you feel may be silly – chances are if you are in a group setting others in the room will be thinking the same thing.
- When completing tests that are timed, don't waste time on difficult questions, move onto the next question and come back to the difficult questions if time permits.

By putting some of these tips into practice, and remembering to be calm and breathe, you will be well on your way to putting your best foot forward when completing psychometric testing for the job you want to secure!